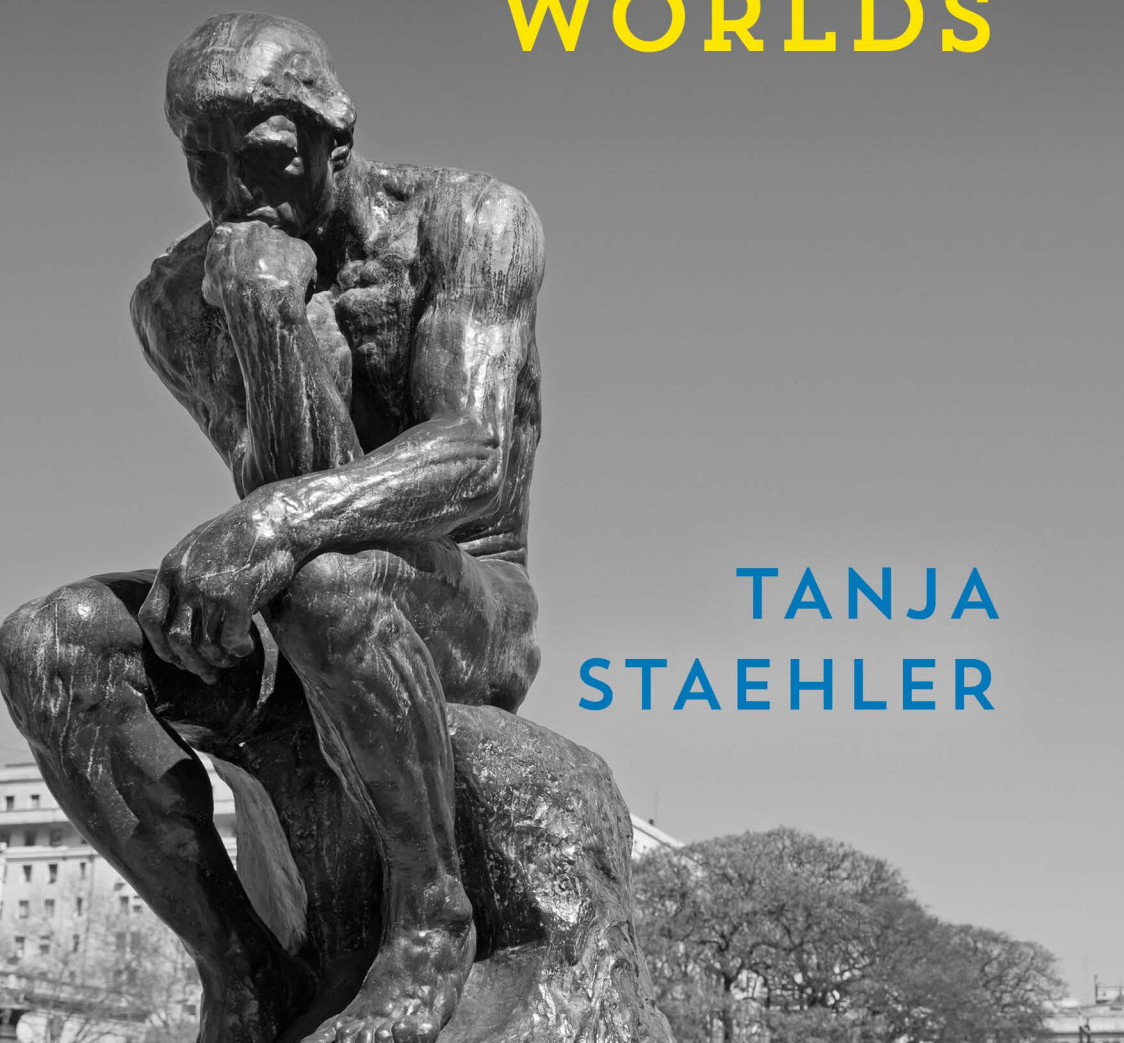


HEGEL,
HUSSERL
AND THE
PHENOMENOLOGY OF
HISTORICAL
WORLDS

TANJA
STAEHLER



Hegel, Husserl and the Phenomenology of Historical Worlds

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To my family

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Abbreviations

I. WORKS BY GWF HEGEL

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich. *Werke* in zwanzig Bänden. Auf der Grundlage der *Werke* von 1832–1845 von E. Moldenhauer & K.M. Michel neu edierte Ausgabe.

- Vol. 2: *Jenaer Schriften 1801–1807 (Jena Writings)*
PhS: Vol. 3: *Phänomenologie des Geistes (Phenomenology of Spirit)*
Vol. 4: *Nürnberger und Heidelberger Schriften 1808–1817 (Nuremberg and Heidelberg Writings)*
ScL I: Vol. 5: *Wissenschaft der Logik I (Hegel's Logic)*
ScL II: Vol. 6: *Wissenschaft der Logik II*
PhR: Vol. 7: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts (Elements of the Philosophy of Right)*
Enc I: Vol. 8: *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften I (Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences)*
Enc. II: Vol. 9: *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften II*
Enc. III: Vol. 10: *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften III (Hegel's Philosophy of Mind: Part Three of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences [1830])*
Vol. 11: *Berliner Schriften 1818–1831. (Berlin Writings)*
PhiHi: *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte (Lectures on the Philosophy of History)*
Aesth.: Vol. 13: *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik I (Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Arts)*
HiPhi I: Vol. 18: *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie I (Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Vol. 1)*

- HiPhi II: Vol. 19: *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie II* (*Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 2)
 HiPhi III: Vol. 20: *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie III* (*Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3)

II. WORKS BY E. HUSSERL

Husserl, Edmund. *Husserliana*

- Hua I: *Cartesianische Meditationen und Pariser Vorträge* (*Cartesian Meditations*)
 Hua III: *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Erstes Buch: Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie. (*Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, First Book. General Introduction to a Pure Phenomenology*)
 Hua IV: *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Zweites Buch: Phänomenologische Untersuchungen zur Konstitution. (*Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, Second Book. Studies in the Phenomenology of Constitution*)
 Hua V: *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie*. Drittes Buch: Die Phänomenologie und die Fundamente der Wissenschaften. (*Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy, Third Book. Phenomenology and the Foundation of the Sciences*)
 Hua VI: *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendentalen*. (*First Philosophy. First Part: Critical History of Ideas*) *Phänomenologie. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie*. (*The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*)
 Hua VII: *Erste Philosophie* (1923/24). Erster Teil: Kritische Ideengeschichte. (*First Philosophy. First Part: Critical History of Ideas*)
 Hua VIII: *Erste Philosophie* (1923/24). Zweiter Teil: Theorie der phänomenologischen Reduktion. (*First Philosophy. Second Part: Theory of the Phenomenological Reduction*)
 Hua IX: *Phänomenologische Psychologie*. Vorlesungen Sommersemester 1925
 Hua X: *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewußtseins* (1893–1917) (*On the Phenomenology of the Consciousness of Internal Time*)
 Hua XI: *Analysen zur passiven Synthesis*. Aus Vorlesungs- und Forschungsmanuskripten 1918–1926. (*Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*)

- Hua XIII: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität*. Texte aus dem Nachlaß. Erster Teil: 1905–1920. (*Phenomenology of Intersubjectivity. Posthumous Writings. First Part: 1905–20*)
- Hua XIV: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität*. Texte aus dem Nachlaß. Zweiter Teil: 1921–1928. (*Phenomenology of Intersubjectivity. Posthumous Writings. Second Part: 1921–28*)
- Hua XV: *Zur Phänomenologie der Intersubjektivität*. Texte aus dem Nachlaß. Dritter Teil: 1929–1935. (*Phenomenology of Intersubjectivity. Posthumous Writings. Third Part: 1929–35*)
- Hua XVII: *Formale und transzendente Logik*. Versuch einer Kritik der logischen Vernunft. (*Formal and Transcendental Logic. Attempt at a Critique of Logical Reason*)
- Hua XXVII: *Aufsätze und Vorträge* (1922–1937)
- Hua XXIX: *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie*. Eine Einleitung in die phänomenologische Philosophie. Ergänzungsband: Texte aus dem Nachlaß 1934–1937. (*Supplementary Texts to The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. Posthumous Texts 1934–35*)
- Hua XXXI: *Aktive Synthesen: Aus der Vorlesung 'Transzendente Logik' 1920/21*. Ergänzungsband zu 'Analysen zur Passiven Synthesis'. (*Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*)

Outside of Husserliana:

- LI I: *Logische Untersuchungen. Band I: Prolegomena zur reinen Logik*. Tübingen 1968. (*Logical Investigations. First Volume*)
- LI II/1: *Logische Untersuchungen. Band II, 1. Teil: Untersuchungen zur Phänomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis*. (*Logical Investigations. Second Volume*)
- EJ: *Erfahrung und Urteil. Untersuchungen zur Genealogie der Logik*. (*Experience and Judgment. Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic.*)

Introduction

This sacrifice is the externalization in which Spirit displays the process of its becoming Spirit in the form of free contingent happening, intuiting its pure self as time outside of it, and equally its being as space.

Hegel, PhS, 492

We will see that the lifeworld (taken omnitemporally) is nothing but the historical world.

Husserl, Hua XXIX, 426

G.W.F. Hegel famously described philosophy as ‘its own time apprehended in thoughts (*ihre Zeit in Gedanken erfasst*)’.¹ Hegel thus claims that our world, the historical world we live in, constitutes the content of philosophy. In fact, he presents it as the defining theme for philosophy, the theme from which philosophy derives its task and thus its essence. The task of philosophy is to describe its historical world by means of concepts. This is a very difficult and complex task, because it requires the philosopher to find concepts adequate to something as large and dynamic as a historical world. The task is further complicated by the fact that our surrounding world is so familiar to us that we take it for granted. We need some way of accessing it, a shift in our attitude that allows us to attend to what we ordinarily take for granted: the normal, everyday world. This also means that philosophy has to attend to that which is the most concrete – our concrete surrounding world. As Hegel shows so well (in a surprisingly short essay), it is in fact philosophy that deals with the concrete, while the non-philosophical attitude, concerned with facts and numbers rather than structures and essences, proves to be the most abstract.²

The same task of attending to historical worlds also emerges in twentieth-century phenomenology. I will here first describe this task in terms shared

by twentieth-century phenomenologists such as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Paul Sartre and even Jacques Derrida, before going on to describe the issue more specifically in Husserl's terms. Between Hegel's philosophy and twentieth-century phenomenology, the nineteenth-century philosophical movement of what later came to be known as existentialism emerged, in response to an impression that Hegel's philosophy did not sufficiently attend to the 'subject', or to who we are. Certain misgivings about Hegel's philosophy, especially concerning his concept of history, will, indeed, emerge in the course of this study. But it can also be shown that the 'existentialist' move actually leads us back to the issue of historical worlds. The movement from existence to the (historical) world takes only a few steps, by way of exploring the relevant concepts.

The crucial train of thought for twentieth-century phenomenology can be summarized as follows. Philosophy begins by considering our existence: who we are. Philosophy thus has to start by investigating existence. Existence means being-in-the-world; that is how Heidegger explicitly puts it, and other twentieth-century phenomenologists would agree. Against Cartesianism, with its supposed problem of how a consciousness can get in touch with the world, phenomenology shows that there is, in fact, no problem: Consciousness is always already out there, concerned with matters, directed at things – and what we are directed at is, ultimately, world. We may not initially notice this, because we are so directed at things in the world that we do not see how all things belong to a wider context, from which they derive their meaning. It is really their meaning within this context that we are after, and so we need to find a way to pause our directedness in order to see better how things are indeed embedded in world, and how it is world that our existence is concerned with. This 'pausing' of our directedness is the most crucial component of phenomenology's method, as we will see in Chapter 1.

If we accept for now that existence is being-in-the-world (this claim will be examined more closely later), we need to explain what world is. World is a shared context that is never static. It never really *is*; it rather *becomes*. World is the continuous development of our context, and because it is a context of meaning shared with others, it is a *historical* world. But this is no different, really, from saying that it is Spirit – notwithstanding the relative opacity of Hegel's concept. Difficulties arise because Spirit, *Geist*, sounds as if it is opposed to matter, as one part of a kind of dualism. But it is not opposed to materiality; indeed, it exists only through materializing itself. (We will see in Chapter 8 how the situation looks a bit different in the *Science of Logic*; yet for the Spirit of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, and generally for Spirit as existing in time, this holds true.) Spirit materializes as a kind of communal consciousness – the Spirit of a historical world – and creates its meaningful context. This

process of Spirit materializing itself in world happens through conflicts and tensions that drive its dialectical movement, as we will see.

The intricate connection between philosophy, existence and world thus makes historical worlds a central topic for philosophy. At the same time, such a project also immediately gives rise to a worry: Can this be done with philosophical rigour? Might not philosophy, when it attends to the 'real' world, lose its clarity and distinction, or have to abandon its concern with a priori conditions and concepts? Hegel stands out as a philosopher who is mindful of the standards imposed by pre-Kantian and Kantian philosophy, yet at the same time relates them back to our world of experience. Hegel thus envisaged a 'phenomenology', that is, a philosophy of lived, concrete experience. For Hegel, such a project requires us always to attend to history, since the world we experience is shaped by the history that has led up to it. If it is to capture the concrete reality of our life, then, philosophy must clarify how history is to be understood.

In the twentieth century, the same project of attending to the world of concrete experience came to occupy Edmund Husserl. Initially, history did not play a crucial role in Husserl's phenomenology, as the emphasis on terms like 'logical' and 'pure' in the titles of his main early works indicates. But his late philosophy treats of topics such as history, crisis and the lifeworld, which all fall, this investigation will argue, under the heading of the historical world. More precisely, Husserl attends to cultural or cultural-historical worlds; yet since a culture, for Husserl, is constituted by its joint history, the term 'historical world' seems a reasonable way of condensing these ideas. The question of the plurality or singularity of lifeworlds is complex and will need to be treated in some detail.

Husserl's investigation of the historical world is motivated by his diagnosis of a crisis that appears to have affected the European lifeworld. In examining this crisis, he was concerned with the issue that had dominated his work throughout his life: the problem of the significance and appropriate shape of philosophy. This problem now turns into the question of the role of philosophy for the current historical world (as a lifeworld in crisis). But in this rather substantial revision of focus from 'transcendental consciousness' to the historical lifeworld, Husserl's position as to the appropriate shape of philosophy still remains the same: phenomenology. The clarification of what phenomenology is and what its possibilities and limits in attending to the historical lifeworld are thus remains crucial.

Even among Husserl scholars, there is a widespread opinion that the late Husserl is a Husserl gone 'soft' or a 'Husserl-lite' that is, a Husserl deploying far less technical terminology and demonstrating much less of a preoccupation with the domain that Husserl calls 'logic'. His late work may, then, appear to

exhibit less of the ‘rigour’ with which he had associated phenomenology in his early work. By contrast, from the perspective of those who consider Husserl’s style and terminology in his early and middle work problematic, there is a different reason for not engaging with Husserl’s late philosophy: When it comes to issues like history and culture, why not read a different philosopher? Why struggle with Husserl’s methodology and terminology if the same themes are discussed, perhaps more insightfully, by others? Those who are interested in history, for instance, might just as well turn to Hegel, who, after Kant took some initial steps in this direction, demonstrated the significance of history for philosophy.

Yet Hegel’s methodology is no less complex than Husserl’s, and may for a number of reasons appear outdated. Hegel’s concept of history, in particular, may be thought dubious since it involves the idea that history can be completed. It is at this point that Hegel and Husserl part ways. Husserl’s view of history is attractive because for him history is an open process, a process that is nevertheless an acceptable topic for philosophy. (In spite of this, Husserl’s concept of history has been criticized, most famously by Jacques Derrida, for holding on to the idea of an inherent teleology in history; see Chapter 9.)

This study argues that Husserl’s philosophy radicalizes Hegel’s. The term ‘radicalization’ is meant here to capture the very movement that Husserl saw his phenomenology as making in relation to previous philosophies, especially scepticism. It means to go to the ‘roots’ (Lat. *radix*); with respect to philosophy, it means to explore what philosophy wanted to accomplish or what its ‘sense’ (*Sinn*) amounted to, and to strive to free philosophy from those assumptions that ultimately hinder the achievement of its task. In relation to scepticism, we will see in Chapter 1 how both Hegel and Husserl aim to radicalise the sceptical principle of *epoché*, or refraining from making assumptions. Concerning history, we will see in the final chapters how Husserl continues the Hegelian project of attending to the historical world, yet radicalizes the underlying concept of history by questioning the assumptions present in Hegel’s understanding of the concept. The fact that, despite his differences from Hegel, Husserl nonetheless still conceives of history as a directed movement that is, at least in retrospect, accessible to reason is, according to the reading proposed here, a phenomenological rather than metaphysical insight, and thus a convincing radicalization of Hegel’s philosophy.

It should be noted, however, that Husserl’s radicalization of Hegel does not imply that Hegel’s philosophy had a strong direct impact on Husserl. Although Husserl read (some) Hegel, his comments on German idealism suggest a rather superficial engagement with this movement.³ Furthermore, it seems that Husserl did not borrow the term ‘phenomenology’ from Hegel’s work, but rather from his contemporaries.⁴ Yet the ‘spirit’ of Hegel’s philosophy seems very present, especially in Husserl’s late work on the historical world.

This study strives to show that with regard to questions of history and culture it is productive to read Hegel and Husserl together. Through such a reading, aspects of their respective philosophies that would otherwise remain hidden come to the fore. Regarding Husserl, this means that certain themes that seem to be ‘missing’ from his philosophy reveal themselves to in fact be present.⁵ By the same token, such a reading discloses a phenomenological perspective in those Hegelian explorations that often appear to be purely metaphysical. As I have already indicated, however, the chief focus will be those issues of shared fascination for both Hegel and Husserl – history, culture and cultural–historical worlds – where Husserl radicalizes German idealist insights by critically examining them with the help of a consistently phenomenological method and an awareness of the need to relate them to our times.

Since both Hegel and Husserl are systematic thinkers (although Husserl is not a *system* thinker), and since history is an extraordinarily complex subject, a series of related topics will need to be considered. Husserl transforms his methodology several times, from the early static approach to his so-called genetic phenomenology and, finally, to what I shall refer to here as ‘historical phenomenology’. There is also a development with respect to the phenomena that he is concerned with, beginning from the perceptual world that forms a paradigm example for Husserl’s phenomenology (Chapter 2). The perceptual world remains the starting point for Husserl since our initial relation to the world is a perceptual relation or the relation of an embodied subject that relates to world through its senses. Even a phenomenology of the historical world needs to begin with the way in which we experience world, and world is experienced by way of perceptual objects. But each perceptual object has a history and refers us to the historical world from which it emerges.

Surprisingly, a realm as apparently straightforward as perception contains several mysteries. One such mystery concerns the relation between a single object and its many characteristics, which exhibit generality. The tension between unity and multiplicity will be encountered on several levels, because of our tendency to favour unity over manifoldness – a tendency that even constitutes the origin of the current crisis, as we will see. There have been many attempts to understand perception better: either by ‘moving up’ to the stable realm of ideas or scientific truths (Chapter 3), or by ‘moving down’ towards the basis of perception in the certainty of the senses, or what appears to be a pure receptivity (Chapter 4). The latter is the more phenomenological move. This move leads to time-consciousness, or the inner temporality of the subject. Yet it will turn out that in order to understand the subject and its relation to the world, we need eventually to take language, intersubjectivity, culture and the entire complexity of the historical world into account.

The final part of this introduction will sketch how, for Husserl, the move towards history is motivated by his diagnosis and examination of a crisis the

origins of which extend back far beyond the 1930s. This final part will also elucidate the structure of the second half of this study. But first things first: How do we begin? Western philosophy began in a particular historical world, in the world of the ancient Greeks, but it also requires us to begin again and again. The question of beginning creates a problem, even a paradox; at the same time, this paradox already sheds some light on the nature of history, since it reveals that the beginning is not just at the start, but involves the meaning or sense of philosophy, which we are still trying to understand and accomplish.

PHILOSOPHY'S ORIGINS

How do we begin? How do we enter into philosophy? In order to approach this question, we need to turn back to that which exists prior to and outside of philosophy: common sense or natural consciousness. To philosophize, it seems, means to leave natural consciousness behind. But this is only one aspect of the process. We leave our point of departure only because we want to take a closer look at it; philosophy does not aim to abandon natural consciousness, but rather to get to know it better by understanding it. Consciousness as it exists prior to and outside of philosophy is not only unaware of philosophy but is also ignorant of itself. If philosophy can show how this is so, it will lose the appearance of being something strange and otiose.

A complication arises, however, because of the fact that we become aware of the destination only at the end and cannot even name or describe it at the beginning. The paradox of beginning consists in the fact that we can only see the beginning retrospectively. Outside of philosophy, we cannot come to an understanding of it; prior to philosophy, we can only begin in a non-philosophical fashion – but if that is the case then we will never be able to enter into philosophy.⁶ Philosophizing thus means to begin with something that cannot really be explained from the outside but requires us simply to leap into it.

This moment of leap or discontinuity is described by both Hegel and Husserl as an abandonment of presuppositions. The condition of a presuppositionless beginning can easily appear as a squared circle, an impossibility in principle. Rather than entering into the complex discussion about the limitations of the idea of a presuppositionless beginning,⁷ however, let me point ahead to the claim that guides this study, namely, that the most promising way of beginning philosophy is to question all presuppositions as much as possible. As such, the beginning is not so much at the start as at the end, and, indeed, all the way along the process. That is the Hegelian insight which carries through to phenomenology and hermeneutics: Certain forms of circularity are not vicious, but necessary.

Beginning philosophy thus means to begin with as few presuppositions as possible and then to continue to identify and question presuppositions along the way. Derrida puts this well when he states that ‘deconstruction, if something of the sorts exists, would above all be an unconditional rationalism that never renounces ... the possibility of suspending ... all conditions, hypotheses, conventions and presuppositions’.⁸ Derrida proposes a continuation and yet a radicalization of the phenomenological principle. This principle strives to take nothing for granted but to question all assumptions. To be sure, this does not amount to a presuppositionless beginning if presuppositionless implies starting from scratch and if beginning suggests a linear understanding of time and procedure. Yet in its most developed version, as historical phenomenology, there is a need for phenomenology to reconsider the concept of history, and this concept will turn out not to be a linear one. It is my conviction that the version of phenomenology I call historical phenomenology can best be described as an unconditional questioning of presuppositions.

Following the Kantian tradition, the unconditional means that which has no conditions, or which holds true under any conditions. Unconditional questioning means that no conditions and no restrictions are imposed and that the questioning is thus carried out in the most radical fashion possible. The thesis that Husserl radicalizes Hegel’s philosophy could then even amount to the claim that Husserl’s phenomenology of the historical lifeworld is an ‘unconditional Hegelianism’.

Before we can attend to historical worlds and the best method of approaching them, a few further preparatory explanations are in order. I will first justify my focusing on just one of Hegel’s works, the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, before giving a very brief outline of the three phases of Husserl’s philosophy, all of which (but in particular the final one) will be relevant for us.

HEGEL AND THE *PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT*

Since Hegel has only one text that he explicitly designates as a ‘phenomenology’, it seems natural to focus on this book for relating it to Husserl’s phenomenology, also given that it is a famous and relatively accessible Hegelian text. Nonetheless, a few remarks about the role of this text within Hegel’s work as a whole are in place, also given that Husserl, as we have seen, does not take the name ‘phenomenology’ from Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Furthermore, the text has a somewhat complex history, and there is a part of one of the other works (*Encyclopaedia*) which bears the same title.

When the *Phenomenology of Spirit* was published in 1807, its main title was ‘System of Science. First Part’ (*System der Wissenschaft. Erster Teil*).

The designation 'Phenomenology of Spirit' followed only after this title. Originally, however, 'Phenomenology of Spirit' was not even the subtitle (or actual title) of the work, which was 'Science of the Experience of Consciousness' (*Wissenschaft der Erfahrung des Bewusstseins*). The different main and subtitles point to a shift in Hegel's assessment of the work, a shift that has since been intensely discussed in the literature. This is not the appropriate place to enter into such discussions.⁹ Nevertheless, two important questions which emerge in these titles cannot be sidestepped. First, in what sense does the *Phenomenology* represent the first part of Hegel's system, and in what sense does it constitute something else? Second, why is the talk sometimes of Spirit, sometimes of consciousness, and how can a 'phenomenology' be a 'science of experience'?

The response to the first question is, in very rough and general terms, that Hegel planned the *Phenomenology* to be the first part of his system, upon which logic, philosophy of nature and philosophy of Spirit were to follow as a second part. As Hegel develops his system in more detail, he changes this outline. In the preface to the first edition of his *Science of Logic* (1812), he writes that he has diverged from his original plan in the sense that now logic by itself constitutes the second part, followed later by the philosophy of nature and of Spirit. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is here still regarded as the first part of the system; it has the 'concept of science' as its result and hence forms logic's 'precondition'.¹⁰ Severe modifications occur in the following five years. The logic steps in as the first part of the system, and the *Phenomenology* instead turns into a component of the third part of the system, the philosophy of Spirit. This is the status quo at the time of the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences*. The 'Phenomenology' of the *Encyclopaedia*, however, is not identical with the *Phenomenology* written in 1807. It not only occupies a different place in the system, but also the trajectory of consciousness in the *Encyclopaedia* ends with Reason; the later chapters on Spirit are no longer attributed to the 'Phenomenology'. What is the relation between the two 'Phenomenologies'? Has Hegel completely revised the role of the 1807 *Phenomenology*?

Hegel's own views on this matter, noted prior to his death concerning a possible revision of the *Phenomenology*, show that he did not consider the 1807 *Phenomenology* to be superfluous. He continues to regard it as the 'antecedent (*Voraus*) of science', having the purpose of 'raising consciousness to this standpoint', namely, the standpoint of science in the sense of the *Logic*.¹¹ Hans Friedrich Fulda has shown that the *Phenomenology* cannot be rendered superfluous since the *Encyclopaedia* system is also in need of an introduction.¹² Hegel places a lot of emphasis on the accessibility of his philosophy, and he rebukes those sciences which make it difficult to find an

entry point to them insofar as they demand that certain presuppositions be accepted without examination or proof.¹³

Although the *Phenomenology* still plays an important role as science's antecedent, it is no longer the first part of the system. Instead, it plays a double role whereby it is, on the one hand, a section within the third part of the *Encyclopaedia* system, and, on the other hand, an independent work preceding that system. Heidegger writes that such a double role results from the system itself¹⁴ – but he does not elaborate on how this is the case. Karl-Heinz Volkmann-Schluck pursues Heidegger's remark and reaches the significant conclusion that the *Phenomenology* 'does not fit into the system, thereby rendering the system impossible' because the historical character of the *Phenomenology* prevents it from 'being assimilated to the absolute certainty of self-knowledge, i.e., the system'.¹⁵ Volkmann-Schluck emphasizes that Hegel does not begin by claiming that truth is historical in order to then deduce the impossibility of the system from a mere presupposition. Exactly the opposite holds; those problems which Hegel encounters in developing his system allow for the historical character of truth to come to appearance. And these problems are above all problems of access or of an introduction, and hence problems regarding the role of the *Phenomenology*. The *Phenomenology* cannot be actually integrated into the system; since it also cannot simply stand outside of the system, its double role arises.

Hegel himself points out that he would not want to rewrite the *Phenomenology* since it corresponds to 'the time of its conception' in the sense that this was a time when 'the abstract absolute reigned'.¹⁶ The absolute came to appearance as abstract during that time because of the prevalent modern contradictions, especially those between subjectivity and objectivity, stood against each other without any reconciliation. According to Hegel, this situation changes in the following years as Spirit realizes its essence, thereby coming to itself. What all this may mean has to be more closely examined in what follows. At this point, it suffices to note that Hegel acknowledges the historical character of the *Phenomenology* while at the same time confirming its right to remain unchanged in that historical stage. The *Phenomenology* does not have to be rewritten – it cannot be rewritten – but it is not rendered invalid.

Yet what is this work, and – this leads us to the second question – what is the relation between a 'Phenomenology of Spirit' and a 'Science of the Experience of Consciousness'? Heidegger describes the *Phenomenology* as follows: 'This work is the absolute whole of experience which knowing has to make of itself, an experience in which it becomes revealed to itself as Spirit, as absolute knowing which ultimately is going through this experience'.¹⁷ The phenomenology of Spirit is the experience which Spirit makes

of itself. Phenomenology is not a science of something, but the way in which Spirit comes on the scene, that is, into appearance.

What is the meaning of science in this context? Hegel explains in his exposition of the *Phenomenology* in the 'Intelligenzblatt der Jenaer Allgemeinen Literatur-Zeitung' that his book presents 'knowing in its becoming' (*das werdende Wissen*).¹⁸ Science (*Wissenschaft*) is not to be understood on the model of the natural sciences, but literally as being concerned with knowledge or knowing (*Wissen*). Hegel's concern is the whole of knowing, knowing what is insofar as it is, knowledge of principles and essences in contrast to a mere collection of what could be known. 'Science dare only organize itself by the life of the concept itself',¹⁹ that is, by the 'self-movement of the concept'.²⁰ The concept (*Begriff*) moves itself, knowing comes to be, Spirit comes to itself – all this implies that, at the beginning, we are not yet where we are aiming to be in the end. Science comes on the scene, comes to appearance; and as it first comes to appearance, for Hegel, it cannot be anything more or other than an appearance. Spirit comes to appearance, and the appearance of Spirit is consciousness. As consciousness moves through the science of its experience, it recognizes itself as Spirit. Phenomenology, for Hegel, is the appearance, emergence, coming-onto-the-scene of Spirit as consciousness, and it is something preliminary.

For Husserl, phenomenology is not anything preliminary, even though for him as well, it is connected to the beginning. In contrast to Hegel, Husserl wants to be a perpetual beginner. Husserl writes – at least in the early and middle phases of his philosophy – not a phenomenology of Spirit, but a phenomenology of consciousness.²¹ However, it was not without reason that Hegel originally designated his *Phenomenology* as a 'Science of the Experience of Consciousness'. Thus there are connections, and yet Hegel and Husserl do not mean the same thing when they talk about a 'phenomenology' (Chapters 5 and 8). The essential differences between them also stem from the fact that Hegel's *Phenomenology* is already directed towards his system. Even though the present study is, for the reasons mentioned, mostly limited to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*,²² at times it will be necessary to draw on other writings as well, especially the *Science of Logic*, *Encyclopaedia* and *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*.

In these preliminary considerations, it has been indicated that Hegel's plan for a scientific system is called into question by the problem of beginning. The historicity of knowing is related to its character as appearing or its phenomenality: As knowing appears, it shows itself as historical and as that which has to undergo a development. But first and foremost, knowing has to come to appearance at all; history can take its course only when there are beginnings or origins.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY

In this section, some of the main ideas of Husserl's phenomenology will be introduced, followed by a brief survey of the development of his philosophy. Literally, 'phenomenology' is the doctrine of that which appears. Husserl formulates the 'principle of all principles', on which phenomenology is based, in the guiding proposition that 'that whatever presents itself in "intuition" in primordial form (as it were in its bodily reality) is simply to be accepted as it gives itself out to be, though only within the limits in which it presents itself'.²³ Self-givenness (*Selbstgegebenheit*) can be regarded as a preliminary determination of what it means for something to appear. It is essential for Husserl's phenomenology that the view onto the things themselves must not be blocked, as it were, by ready-made theories. Theories would conceal or cover the self-givenness of the phenomenon, rather than letting it come to show itself. At the same time, this guiding proposition is derived from the ideal of being presuppositionless which has always guided science, for Husserl conceives his phenomenology, as well, as a science.²⁴

Husserl's early philosophy, which he himself later designates as 'static' (or 'descriptive') phenomenology (Hua XI, 340), aims to find and analyse general structures of our experience (e.g. the perspectival nature of perception). Time, which Husserl calls a 'completely self-contained sphere of problems and one of exceptional difficulty' (Hua III, 236/197), is bracketed at first; under observation are acts of consciousness and their correlates, that is, real or ideal (e.g. mathematical) objects. How these acts of consciousness are possible or how they come to be is not investigated. Around 1917, Husserl started developing a different kind of phenomenological analysis, namely, 'genetic' (or 'explanatory') phenomenology. Genetic phenomenology examines how the acts investigated by static phenomenology come to be and how our experience is configured as a unified context. For example, all of our perceptual experience is characterized by a horizontal structure – but how are horizons formed? I always already find myself in the midst of horizons which must have taken shape in some way.

Husserl distinguishes between two kinds of genesis: active and passive genesis. Active genesis comprises all productive, constitutive egoic acts, 'all works of practical reason, in a maximally broad sense',²⁵ such as the production of cultural goods, but also the development of scientific theories. Such active accomplishments Husserl calls 'primordial institutions' (*Urstiftungen*). Consciousness has the ability to come back to the newly instituted object – 'object' here taken in its widest sense – again and again. The primordial institution becomes 'habitualized', and turns into a habitual experience. In this way, a new horizon is fashioned in which we can move without having to actively carry out the primordial institution again. Accomplishments

of active genesis thus become available for passive genesis once they have been habitualized or ‘sedimented’. But passive genesis also occurs prior to such active accomplishments. It includes everything which happens prior to perception, which enables us to perceive: for example, the formation of time as well as the core principle of passive genesis, namely, association, which is particularly effective in unifying different moments of consciousness.

‘Genetic phenomenology’ moves beyond ‘static phenomenology’ since it takes time into consideration, which the latter wanted to exclude, and turns to the ‘genesis’ of our consciousness. However, genetic phenomenology is still limited by the individual’s birth and death; it remains within the boundaries of individual inner time consciousness. The ‘generative²⁶ [*generativen*] problems of birth and death and the context of generations’ do belong ‘obviously to a higher dimension’;²⁷ such a phenomenology ‘is not restricted to the individual or a synchronous community of monads, but is concerned with historical sense constitution’.²⁸ The essential principle of the *V. Cartesian Meditation*, namely, ‘empathy’ (*Einfühlung*) – which Husserl investigates in light of his analyses of passive synthesis – is only valid for synchronous communities of monads, not for historical communities across generations. It will hence be necessary to consider the significance of linguistic communication which endures through its historical epoch in the form of myth, stories and writings such that it can be passed on as a ‘heritage’ (*Erbe*). Such heritage constitutes our homeworld; Husserl’s late intersubjective phenomenology is essentially a phenomenology of homeworlds and alienworlds. Against Steinbock and with Derrida – and on good grounds within Husserl’s work, as we will see (Chapter 8) – we will refer to this third phase of Husserl’s methodology as ‘historical phenomenology’.

Historical phenomenology sheds new light on the relation between Hegel and Husserl. As Husserl had already regarded static phenomenology as abstract in comparison to genetic phenomenology, he now regards the analyses belonging to historical phenomenology as the most concrete²⁹ – just as Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* exhibits a progression from the more abstract to the more concrete. Moreover, the phenomena to which Husserl turns his attention when developing a generative phenomenology bear a striking resemblance to those taken up in the latter chapters of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, for example, family, state, normativity, art and religion. Investigating these concrete areas is necessary for an understanding of the crisis Husserl diagnoses regarding our historical world.

CRISIS AND HISTORY

How does the crisis that Husserl diagnoses become manifest? Husserl claims that we experience a crisis of our existence because the sciences, especially the natural sciences, fail to provide answers to those questions that move us

and concern us.³⁰ The problem is not just that the sciences bracket or leave out these questions, but that they adopt an attitude towards them that consciously disregards them due to their subjective nature. The scientific objectivism is at the root of the crisis, according to Husserl, because this objectivism entails one-sidedness and forgetfulness.

According to Husserl, although the crisis is a contemporary phenomenon, it did not arise suddenly or due to some contingent historical cause. Rather, the crisis has come about because certain tendencies that were already part of the original sense of philosophy and the sciences became stronger and stronger over the centuries. More precisely, there was a duality in the original sense of philosophy and the sciences that was then pursued in an increasingly one-sided fashion. In Husserl's terms, the duality concerns the subject-relative ways in which an object is given to us, in contrast to the unified, identical object. In a statement that may sound somewhat naïve, yet which reflects original ancient Greek themes and insights quite well, Husserl writes: 'It is the same sun, the same moon, the same earth, the same sea etc. which are mythologized so differently by the different peoples, in accordance with their respective traditions.'³¹ The sciences in particular search for persistent truth, for the identity of the object in contrast to the manifold subjective (and cultural) modes in which it is grasped.

This lays the groundwork for the defect of the modern sciences, namely, their one-sided focus on objectivity at the expense of considering the subjectivity that lies at its basis. Indeed, the tendency towards objectivism must already be present if Husserl is right in claiming that the sciences emerged from a unified sense and, in the beginning, pursued a unified goal. Hence Husserl's project of questioning the *Urstiftungssinn*: the original sense with which philosophy and the sciences were instituted. If it is possible to return to or revisit the initial division between subjective modes of givenness and the non-relative core, phenomenology can pursue its project of 'rehabilitating' modes of givenness.

Husserl thus assumes that an examination of the crisis and an exploration of the original sense with which the sciences were founded can, in a sense, point to a 'cure' for the crisis by making us aware of the one-sidedness of the scientific approach and so allowing us to achieve a more balanced perspective. The question of the possibility of curing the crisis emerges naturally, not only because the diagnosis highlights an undesirable state of affairs, but also because Husserl relies at least partly on the medical concept of crisis.³² Crisis in the medical sense is the turning point of a disease, the point at which there will either be a turn to the better or to the worse. At this point there is still the possibility of a cure, but at the same time there is an internal necessity to the disease that will determine the outcome of the crisis.

Similarly, the crisis of European humanity names a state of affairs that includes certain possibilities for healing (by examining the causes of the

crisis), but which also bears an inner necessity because of the fact that the crisis has been in the making for many centuries.³³ A cure may thus be possible, but it will not be simple, and it might be opposed by historical necessities that are not under the control of the phenomenologist. For example, even though Husserl revealed the origins of the crisis of the European natural sciences, the quantitative or objectivist framework might well have re-emerged since the time in which he was writing. Perhaps such a re-emergence explains, at least in part, the spread of an unleashed capitalism as the major economic paradigm, strengthened by certain political structures and convictions that are based on its 'truth'. Husserl's crisis may, then, still concern us, and his analysis may prove helpful in analysing the current crisis of European humanity; but these are issues we cannot pursue further here (see Chapter 9). To see the connection between crisis and mathematical ideality more clearly, we need to rather focus on the processes that mark the origins of geometry, which Husserl terms *mathematization* or *idealization*.

We will need to see whether the crisis in Husserl's sense still determines our historical world. We have already seen that the Husserlian crisis is not limited to Husserl's times, but extends back to the beginnings of philosophy and the sciences. In relating the Husserlian diagnosis to our times, we need only to investigate how this extended crisis manifests itself for us. Has the paradigm of natural scientific truth been replaced by something else? On the one hand, we still believe that the sciences are going to reveal the truth about us, including our bodies, our consciousness and even our emotions and thoughts (as the rapid development of neuroscience shows). On the other hand, there is increased trust in something that arguably is not even a true science, namely, economics. Economics is concerned with the processes surrounding the universal measuring standard of money, which determines and regulates our interactions. Money and the regulated exchange between currencies appear to operate on the basis of a fair standard, but as we have seen at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there are a plethora of processes relating to the production, distribution, saving and accumulation of money that are anything but fair, and that are far from transparent and are in some cases barely comprehensible. This would, in any case, be another instance of the quantification and mathematization of the lifeworld, another seemingly well-fitting garb of ideas – to use the expression Husserl applies to the quantitative approach of the natural sciences, as we will see (Chapter 3) – designed to create an illusion of truth and equality.

Yet if we try to examine the contemporary world with the help of phenomenology, a deeper problem emerges. If the crisis began with the Greeks, was taken to new levels with the sciences of the modern era and was manifested itself in a certain way in the twentieth century and in a related, yet

modified, way in the twenty-first century, should we not conclude that this is a crisis that has always been present since the *Urstiftung* of the sciences in ancient Greece? There are certainly reasons to think so, and it would be worthwhile (yet not possible within the framework we have set ourselves here) to describe how the difference between unity and manifoldness plays out for each historical world, and particularly which unifying, order-creating principle or set of principles is prioritized in each instance. Such a project would be akin to Heidegger's project of outlining our history of ideas as a history of metaphysics, and his project may indeed suggest that even before the successes of quantification in the modern era there were already unifying principles in operation, especially of the theological kind.

It may thus be reasonable to claim that crisis has a general structure that manifests itself differently and takes on a specific shape in each particular historical world. Would this not mean that the structure of a crisis functions on the level of an idea? And if we were mostly to focus on the structures of crisis, history and world, would we not end up replicating the very same activity that is at the core of the crisis, that is, giving primacy to the stable, unifying principle? In a sense, yes. And just like it has always been Derrida's project to ask whether Husserl is staying truthful to his own insights, we also need to ask whether Husserl's concept of history might not be a product of the same kind of prioritization that determines the European crisis. History, for Husserl, seems to also have a certain definite structure (see Chapter 9). If there is a structure to history and if European history has been determined by an overarching crisis with different facets, do we not indeed (as Levinas and Derrida have claimed and as we will need to examine more closely) lose or diminish our possibilities of thinking the new, the surprising, the specific? Furthermore, does it make sense to consider the European crisis given that there may be no solution to it?

From the phenomenological perspective, the task is always to think both the unified idea and the multiple manifestations. As long as there is also the possibility of considering singular historical worlds, there is no reason not to ask about the structure of history. Both Hegel and Husserl conceive of history as an interconnected development rather than as a series of contingent, dissociated events. This is a precondition for developing a methodology for historical phenomenology (Chapter 8), but it also seems justified as far as our experience of an historical world is concerned. When it comes to the development of one cultural world over time, there cannot be any doubt that the past development or history of this world is reflected in its current state and possibilities. This is related to the way in which human beings shape their world through cultural products and engagement as well as through political and ethical decisions (Chapter 10). Because humans constitute their world, it is not surprising that

history appears to be shaped by reason; yet there are also diverse possibilities of exploiting reason for selfish or even malicious purposes.

The real task for historical phenomenology thus consists in thinking the singular as well as the structure. This twofold attention is the appropriate response to Husserl's examination of the crisis' origin from the prioritization of unity and objectivity in all theory. With such twofold attention, it is possible to explore singular events and origins in history, but also to attend to the general structure of history, which is that of a cultural world evolving. But how are we to think the singular and the general structure, and perhaps even the relation between them? There is a dimension of our existence where we experience this duality on an everyday basis, namely, intersubjectivity or our relation to others (Chapter 7). The Other is always a singular, unique other, but he or she is *also* an alter ego. Here, Husserl is right. In relation to intersubjectivity, Husserl not only confirms a need to conceptualize affinities between me and the Other, but also, like Hegel, phenomenologically demonstrates the inaccessibility of the Other. Furthermore, Husserl establishes that there is also an inaccessibility at the core of myself, which emerges from primordial delays and limitations regarding my self-reflection. Such otherness within the self is often presented as a second level of realization, but as both Hegel and Husserl show, it is in fact an original alterity.

On the level of worlds or alienworlds, the inaccessibility of the alien can more easily be seen in its origin, as emerging from the way in which the alien-world historically evolved. At the same time, worlds are particularly difficult to access because we are so used to being embedded in them. There is another approach that reveals world to us: art. Due to its connections as well as differences from philosophy, it supplements phenomenology nicely. Literature in particular stands out since it uses the same medium or the same kind of ideality as philosophy: language. Husserl is clearly aware of this affinity when he emphasizes the role of fiction and fantasy for phenomenology. Heidegger takes this idea further by showing how a work of art opens up a world that turns out to be an historical world, thus giving rise to the problem of how we can relate to art when its world has passed (Chapter 10). Art makes a cultural world present, and it does so always by attending to the singular as well as the general. In that sense, phenomenology can learn from art where the relation to the singular is concerned.

Understanding our world better will also provide us with a better understanding of its inherent crisis. And even though there may not be a 'cure' for this crisis – especially given the fact that it is a pervasive structure of our European world – such an understanding nonetheless has ethical implications; this understanding can allow us to overcome a particular manifestation of crisis that affects an historical world. This will not eliminate the basic alienness or unreadability of world, but will allow us to understand it better,

and might thus inspire the kind of wonder in the face of the alien from which philosophy begins.

This investigation builds on my earlier book, *Die Unruhe des Anfangs. Hegel und Husserl auf dem Weg in die 'Phänomenologie'* (*The Restlessness of Beginning. Hegel and Husserl on the Way to 'Phenomenology'*). Since this text is not available in English, and since it is relevant for a phenomenology of the historical world, I summarize some of its conclusions here.

The predominant procedure or method in this study is phenomenological, although 'phenomenology' here means something broader than it does in the case of Hegel or Husserl. The focus lies with the phenomena in question, phenomena such as history, culture and intersubjectivity. This means trying to understand how Hegel's and Husserl's texts describe these phenomena, as well as investigating whether their descriptions are accurate. While the first chapters of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* have been subject to several phenomenological readings already (most famously by Heidegger and Fink),³⁴ these interpretations do not go beyond the chapter on self-consciousness. Although it is certainly not possible here to attempt a phenomenological reading of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as a whole, I will provide readings of specific phenomena such as conscience and certain aspects of intersubjectivity, morality and *Sittlichkeit*.

The main difference between a phenomenological approach and the majority of contemporary approaches, especially in the Anglophone literature, is that the latter seek to relate Husserl and Hegel to current analytic debates, especially in epistemology and metaphysics. My decision not to engage with such debates is not just due to my lack of expertise in this area, but has a more substantial rationale. In the recent secondary literature on Hegel and Husserl, attempts to relate their philosophies to current epistemological and metaphysical debates are quite common. Yet it seems difficult to determine whether Hegel is a foundationalist or a holist, whether Husserl is an externalist or an internalist, and so on. In the end, I have usually been convinced by those essays that argue that such questions cannot be decided because neither Hegel nor Husserl completely shares the theoretical assumptions and presuppositions of any of these analytic positions.³⁵ The three method chapters in particular strive to show how phenomenology in Hegel's and Husserl's sense is neither a realism nor an idealism in the classic, analytic sense. How the analytic formulation of the problem fails to capture the phenomenological task will be spelled out with respect to the problem of non-conceptual content (Chapter 4) as well as the problem of other minds (Chapter 7).

Some of the literature fails sufficiently to consider Hegel's reminder in the 'Introduction' to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*: 'It is a natural assumption that

in philosophy, before we start to deal with its proper subject-matter, viz. the actual cognition of what truly is, one must first of all come to an understanding about cognition. ... Meanwhile, if the fear of falling into error sets up a mistrust of science ..., it is hard to see why we should not turn round and mistrust this very mistrust.’³⁶ Adopting clear theoretical positions towards the subject matter seems at first glance to provide methodological stability. But because of their lack of justification, we need to mistrust them; otherwise, we will be led into endless preliminary debates. Instead: back to the things themselves! This will turn out to mean back to historical worlds.

Anonymous reviewers who have given me very helpful advice on this manuscript (thank you!) have commented that the differences between Hegel and Husserl are not emphasized as much in my study as are their connections. That may be true; but my understanding of phenomenology as committed to the things themselves and ultimately to historical worlds themselves means that exploring the phenomena together is always more interesting than exploring differences. Plus, exploring differences risks staying on the level of empty method about which Hegel delivers the stinging criticism cited in the previous paragraph. When it comes to the concrete matters of historical worlds, Hegel and Husserl deliver systematic accounts that complement one another in many ways. One way they complement one another has to do with their authors’ ambitions: Both strive for a theory of everything that is never just theory. They develop philosophies that embark on the difficult work of suspending all assumptions. As a result, philosophy must move in circles and even zigzags, as Husserl points out in one of his radicalizations. The result cannot be visualized, except maybe as a kind of volatile, spiralling movement that picks up everything in its wake and transports it in steady yet only partially predictable movements, with zigzagging movements – a bit like a tornado, but moving much more slowly: world history as the history of a plurality of worlds.

NOTES

1. Hegel, Preface, PhR, 11.
2. Hegel, ‘Who Thinks Abstractly?’ (‘Wer denkt abstrakt?’), in Vol. 2, 445–449.
3. Husserl acquired Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* in 1884, during his studies (cf. R. Bernet et al., *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology* [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1993], 217). We have retained at least one remark of Husserl regarding this work: ‘Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*: Hegel attempts to show how human Spirit is driven from the standpoint of a naïve conception regarding world and life to the standpoint of philosophy – driven by the contradictions contained inherent in the naïve conception’ (Husserl, Hua VII, 312). Yet Husserl did not offer any classes about Hegel (cf. Bernet et al., *Husserlian Phenomenology*, 217ff.), while he did offer several seminars about Descartes and Kant, whose influence on Husserl’s philosophy is made obvious at various points in his writings.

4. Likely sources include Hermann Lotze, Max Gießler, Carl Stumpf, Franz Brentano and Ernst Mach. The secondary literature differs on this point; the only point on which scholars agree concerns the equivocity of the term's origin. Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement* (The Hague: Kluwer), 154, n. 52, and Karl Schuhmann, *Die Fundamentalbetrachtung der Phänomenologie (Considerations Fundamental to Phenomenology)* (The Hague: Kluwer, 1971), 62, n. 66, favor Gießler and Lotze as well as the circle of Brentano and Stumpf more generally. Niels W. Bokhove, *Phänomenologie - Ursprung und Entwicklung des Terminus in 18. Jahrhundert (Phenomenology – Origin and Development of the Notion in the 18th Century)* (Aalen: Scientia, 1991), 343f., makes a case for Ernst Mach, based on a manuscript of Husserl dated prior to the first appearance of the term in Husserl's published work. The fact that Husserl, in his published work, uses the term for the first time in a footnote and without further explanation (Husserl, LI I, 212, n. 1) indicates to my mind that the expression 'phenomenology' was common among Husserl's contemporaries such that he felt he could employ it without explication and in the sense that was familiar to his contemporaries.

5. One might mention here the issue of a 'supra-personal' (*überpersonalen*) consciousness, problems of morality and ethics as well as teleology in history and so on.

6. I am paraphrasing Hegel's thought from the beginning of the *Science of Logic*, 'Womit der Anfang der Wissenschaft gemacht werden muss' ('What the Beginning of Science Must Be Made With'), ScL I, 70–76.

7. See the discussion of Merleau-Ponty's position in the Postscript later in the book.

8. Jacques Derrida, *Rogues. Two Essays on Reason*, transl. M. Naas et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 142.

9. Cf. on this point Otto Pöggeler, *Hegels Idee einer Phänomenologie des Geistes (Hegel's Idea of a Phenomenology of Spirit)* (Freiburg: Alber, 1993) and Hans Friedrich Fulda, *Das Problem einer Einleitung in Hegels Wissenschaft der Logik (The Problem of an Introduction to Hegel's Science of Logic)* (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1965) as the main contributions to the discussion.

10. Hegel, ScL I, 67.

11. This assessment of Hegel's can be found in J. Hoffmeister's edition of the *Phänomenologie des Geistes (Phenomenology of Spirit)* (Meiner: Hamburg, 1952), 578.

12. Cf. Fulda, *Hegels Wissenschaft*.

13. Hegel, ScL II, 526ff.

14. Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 12.

15. Karl-Heinz Volkman-Schluck, *Hegel. Die Vollendung der abendländischen Metaphysik (Hegel. The Completion of Western Metaphysics)* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1998), 140f.

16. Hoffmeister edition of the *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 578.

17. Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology*, 37.

18. Hegel, PhS, 593.

19. Hegel, PhS, 31/51.

20. Hegel, PhS, 44/65.

21. Cf. Paul Ricoeur, 'Hegel et Husserl sur Intersubjectivité', in *Phénoménologies Hégélienne et Husserlienne (Hegelian and Husserlian Phenomenologies)*, ed. G.

Planty-Bonjour (Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1981), 6: 'Le rapport est ainsi un rapport croisé entre une phénoménologie de la conscience qui se surélève en phénoménologie de l'esprit – Husserl – et une phénoménologie de l'esprit qui demeure une phénoménologie dans la conscience – Hegel.'

22. This study is certainly not a commentary on the *Phenomenology of Spirit*; such a commentary cannot and shall not be accomplished here. But most chapters of the *Phenomenology* are taken up at one point or another, though not necessarily in the order of their appearance in Hegel's work. The following is a rough guide outlining where each section will be discussed: sense-certainty – Chapter 4; perception – Chapter 2; understanding – Chapter 3; self-consciousness – Chapters 7, 8; morality – Chapter 10; religion – Chapter 5; absolute knowing – Chapter 8.

23. Husserl, Hua III, 92/52.

24. For example, Husserl, Hua III, 3.

25. Husserl, Hua I, 111/77.

26. Strangely, Cairns here translates *generativen* as 'genetic'.

27. Husserl, Hua I, 169/170.

28. Anthony J. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond. Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995).

29. Cf. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond*, 47f. and 265ff.; cf. Husserl, Hua XV, 138, fn. 2.

30. Husserl does not give examples for these questions, but we can find quite a number of such examples in existentialist philosophy and literature.

31. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 387.

32. This has been pointed out by Derrida and other interpreters: cf. Derrida, *Rogues*, 169; James Dodd, *Crisis and Reflection. An Essay on Husserl's Crisis of the European Sciences* (The Hague: Kluwer, 2004), 44–46.

33. Both concepts of crisis need to be considered. To my mind, Dodd narrows down the concept of crisis too much when he states: 'On this reading, if crisis is a disease, it is one for which there is no cure, critique or not; it would be like calling life itself a disease' (Dodd, *Crisis and Reflection*, 56).

34. Martin Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, transl. P. Emad et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Martin Heidegger, 'Hegel's Concept of Experience', in *Off the Beaten Track*, transl. J. Young et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 86–156; Eugen Fink, *Hegel: Phänomenologische Interpretation der 'Phänomenologie des Geistes' (Hegel: Phenomenological Interpretation of the 'Phenomenology of Spirit')* (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1977).

35. In particular, I agree with David Stern that readings of Hegel's philosophy in terms of holism or foundationalism misunderstand the nature of Hegel's project (David Stern, 'Foundationalism, Holism, or Hegel?', *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 22, no. 1(1991): 21–32). In relation to Husserl, Felix O'Murchadha shows very well that the alternative between externalism and internalism tries to force phenomenology into a scheme that is based on presuppositions not shared by Husserl (Felix O'Murchadha, 'Reduction, Externalism and Immanence in Husserl and Heidegger', *Synthese*, 160, no. 3 [2008]: 375–395).

36. Hegel, PhS, 68f./46f.

Chapter 1

Phenomenological Method I – *Epoché*

Consequently, we do not need to import criteria, or to make use of our own bright ideas and thoughts during the course of the inquiry; it is precisely when we leave these aside that we succeed in contemplating the matter in hand as it is in and for itself.

Hegel, PhS, 77/54

In this situation it is unavoidable the he [i.e., Descartes], and anyone who seriously seeks to be a philosopher, begin with a sort of *radical, skeptical epochē* which places in question all his hitherto existing convictions, which forbids in advance any judgmental use of them, forbids taking any position as to their validity or invalidity. Once in his life every philosopher must proceed in this way. ...

Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*

This is the first of three chapters concerned with methodology, and it presents an approach that emerges in retrospect from the Husserlian perspective as ‘static’ because it neither considers time (or temporality) nor history (or historicity). At the same time, it is concerned with an element that even Hegel, the greatest philosopher of history, deems a necessary component of all philosophy, as we will see. Although there will be many transformations especially of Husserl’s phenomenology, the element discussed here at the beginning remains an important component throughout. This element is an essential component of what it means to do a phenomenology, namely, to start with ‘mere’ *description*, leaving out anything that goes beyond what *experience* delivers to us.

This element requires a discontinuity to our normal attitude; yet it is this discontinuity that allows us to explore the natural attitude later on. The

discontinuous aspect of the move to philosophy shall be examined in this chapter with respect to the phenomenological *epoché* in Husserl and the activity which Hegel, in his 'Introduction' to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, designates as 'simply looking on'. The connecting element is provided by ancient scepticism. Hegel and Husserl strive to free their introductions to philosophy from presuppositions. While the principle of scepticism is well suited for this task, both of them – albeit in different ways and for different reasons – conclude that ancient scepticism falls short of its inherent principle which they now wish to fulfil with their own philosophies.

HEGEL AND SCEPTICISM

In his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Hegel claims that although scepticism has always been held to be the 'invincible opponent of philosophy', in fact, 'it does not oppose it, nor is it outside of it, for skepticism is a moment in it', namely, in positive philosophy.¹ In this section, I examine how Hegel comes to this statement. There are three stages of Hegel's discussion of scepticism. Hegel for the first time tackled scepticism in 1802 in an essay entitled 'The Relation of Skepticism to Philosophy: A Presentation of Its Various Modifications and a Comparison of the Newest Skepticism with Ancient Skepticism'. This essay deals in a partly rather polemic way with a form of new scepticism that is presented by Gottlob Ernst Schulze in his book *Critique of Theoretical Philosophy*. Hegel criticizes Schulze's theory by showing its inner contradictions as well as showing how it did not remain true to the principles of ancient scepticism. Ancient scepticism is said to be widely superior to new scepticism since it refrains from expressing a certainty while the new scepticism develops the concept of a thing which lies behind and underneath the things as appearing.² Instead of criticizing natural consciousness and showing its contradictions, which, according to Hegel, is the most honourable side of ancient scepticism, new scepticism asserts the certainty of natural consciousness' convictions. It affirms that every fact of consciousness is certain and true. Ancient scepticism, on the other hand, develops and keeps up the true principle of scepticism, as it will be investigated in the following part of this chapter.

By contrasting ancient and new scepticism, Hegel arrives at two important insights on the relation of ancient scepticism to philosophy: First, ancient scepticism can be regarded as the first step on the way to philosophy, meaning that it can provide a beginning of philosophy. For philosophy to begin with natural consciousness, it has to overcome the convictions of natural consciousness – and this is exactly what ancient scepticism does by opposing the dogmatism of common consciousness. New scepticism, on the other hand,

asserts the truth of natural consciousness and hence can be refuted not only by ancient scepticism but even by natural consciousness itself that knows very well that its convictions do not hold as stable truth.³

Second, Hegel states that scepticism in its true form is intimately one with philosophy, and that its principle can be found as an implicit moment of each philosophical system. This principle is expressed in the sentence: ‘*panti logo logos isos antikeitai*’ – ‘every *logos* has an equally valid *logos* opposed to it’. The fact that this principle does not obey to the proposition of non-contradiction cannot be brought up as a valid objection since, according to Hegel, every genuine philosophy has to sublate (*aufheben*) the proposition of non-contradiction; thus, this ‘negative side’, this principle of scepticism, is inherent in every genuine philosophy.

In the ‘Introduction’ to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), the thesis of scepticism being a principle inherent in philosophy emerges again. Two forms of scepticism are distinguished in this text: on the one hand, there is ‘thoroughgoing skepticism’;⁴ on the other hand, we have scepticism as a mere shape of incomplete consciousness. Scepticism as merely being a shape has not yet fully recognized itself, and has not yet completely carried out its principle. Following the shape of stoicism and preceding so-called ‘unhappy consciousness’, scepticism as a shape is a negative in itself and annihilates the being of the world.⁵ However, what scepticism in this incomplete form does not recognize and what causes its inner contradictions is the fact that the nothingness evolving out of negation is not a pure nothingness, but a determinate nothingness: It is the nothingness of whatever it results from and hence has a content. The principle incomplete scepticism has not yet at its disposal but which presents the essential feature of thoroughgoing scepticism is this principle of *determinate negation*. In recognizing that the nothingness resulting from negation is determined by what is negated as well as preserved and elevated in it, a new shape of consciousness has arisen.

Scepticism has a significance for the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in yet another sense: It can be shown that there is a movement going on that is similar to the sceptic *epoché*. The *epoché* is an important element of ancient scepticism: Realizing that opposite matters and arguments have equal validity, the sceptics decided to refrain from judgement altogether – this refraining is the *epoché*. In the ‘Introduction’ to his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel describes a shift which is a necessary beginning for the development of Spirit that has certain similarities with this *epoché*. Hegel is talking about a ‘we’, a ‘we’ that accompanies consciousness on its way to absolute knowing. ‘We’ are already philosophers – and precisely because of this, we are not allowed to prescribe anything to natural consciousness, but just watch it on its way. Hegel says that ‘all that is left for us to do is simply to look on’,⁶ and that in order to do this, we leave aside all our criteria and ideas about the matter

at hand – which basically means that we refrain from our assumptions and judgements.⁷ Refraining from all judgements yields presuppositionlessness which is the condition for entering into science. The transition into philosophy is not a continuous one, but rather requires something like a leap, as it were – this fact is articulated by Hegel's request to leave all assumptions aside in the very beginning.

Finally, certain features of scepticism can be found in Hegel's account of the first shape of consciousness in his *Phenomenology*, sense-certainty (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4).⁸ The well-known example that is used to show the inner contradictoriness of sense-certainty, 'Now is night', can be found in Sextus Empiricus.⁹ Moreover, confronting the statement 'Now is night' with the statement 'Now is day' or 'Now is noon' means to follow the sceptical principle. While ancient scepticism's response to the confrontation of statements having equal rights would be to carry out the *epoché* and thus to refrain from judgement, the result in Hegel is a determinate negation which means moving on to the next moment of sense-certainty. As we will see next, the ten tropes of Pyrrhonian scepticism can be put into a relation with the three moments of sense-certainty. Let me just note here that the third moment, mere pointing, resembles the reaction of Cratylus who after recognizing the impossibility to express a true statement apparently proceeded to just moving his finger.¹⁰

While in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* scepticism plays an important role in a number of respects, the significance of scepticism for Hegel's method seems to grow less in the *Science of Logic* and in the *Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences*. Yet there are some remarks in the *Encyclopaedia* that show the remaining importance of scepticism; it rather seems that in developing the final shape of his method, Hegel integrated the sceptic principle into his method such that he no longer deals with it separately. In Section 78 of the *Encyclopaedia* we find some short, but dense remarks about scepticism. Hegel states that 'being a negative science that has gone through all forms of cognition, skepticism might offer itself as an introduction'.¹¹ But at the same time, Hegel designates the sceptic way as 'redundant' since it is an essential element of affirmative science; besides, it only takes up the finite forms 'empirically and unscientifically'. Is there a contradiction between calling scepticism a science and yet an unscientific way? If those statements should be true without contradicting each other, they have to refer to different aspects of the problematic. The problem is connected to the distinction of thoroughgoing scepticism and incomplete scepticism as Hegel develops it in the 'Introduction' of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Scepticism is scientific in so far as it is thoroughgoing scepticism, scepticism recognizing its principle. But, as Hegel says in this paragraph, scepticism that has gone through all forms of cognition is a moment of affirmative science, and

if it is integrated in this way, it no longer serves as an introduction. On the other hand, scepticism as a separate way, dissolved from other moments of science, could be a possible introduction into philosophy. Scepticism that has not yet fully come to its principle is closer to natural consciousness and would in that sense make a good introduction – but scepticism as separate from science is unscientific; it merely takes up shapes as it finds them and is thus determined by contingency. Incomplete scepticism lacks the necessity science requires, and it does not provide completeness since it merely takes up what it finds.

Since the problem of a beginning of philosophy lies in the very fact that this beginning must already be science, scepticism as incomplete and unscientific cannot serve as a beginning; the question whether thoroughgoing scepticism can provide an introduction has to be taken up below. The quest for thoroughgoing scepticism, so Hegel says, can be equated with presuppositionlessness as the condition for science; yet this condition is carried out in the ‘will to think purely’.¹² This will resembles the request to leave all assumptions aside in the very beginning as it is expressed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. While philosophy, on the one hand, requires a leap in the beginning, on the other hand it has to go through a movement, a development, and it is Hegel’s merit to put the emphasis on the developmental character of philosophy. Therefore, the ‘determination to think purely’ is not sufficient, but is only a very first step. The question is how to move on, and scepticism, as long as it is merely negative, does not provide an answer to this question. In the following section, I want to give an account of the concept of scepticism as Hegel develops it in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*; I will thereby contextualize what has been evoked in the previous section.

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF ANCIENT SCEPTICISM

What are the essential features of ancient scepticism that Hegel develops in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*? Since Hegel states himself that Sextus Empiricus for us is by far the most important writer upon scepticism,¹³ the main focus here will be on Sextus’s account of Pyrrhonian scepticism as it is presented in Hegel’s lectures and as Sextus presents it in his own writings. The term *skepsis* derives from the verb *skeptomai*, which means to look around, to examine, to search. Sextus introduces the Sceptics by distinguishing three types of philosophy, all of which have in common that they search for something.¹⁴ The first group are the so-called Dogmatics who claim that they have found the truth; the second group are the Academics who state that the truth cannot be apprehended. The third are the Sceptics who are still searching and continue to do so.

Hegel begins his account by saying that scepticism substituted for Being the expression appearance.¹⁵ In order to understand both the problems scepticism was responding to and the solutions it suggested, it is essential to clarify the distinction between Being and appearance. Already in prephilosophical life, we encounter the relativity of appearances: For example, people argue about matters that appear differently to them, and in doing so, they presuppose that there is something like a true and final answer to the question since otherwise there would be no point in arguing. The argument presupposes that the matter in question actually *is* one way or the other, and that this true Being of the matter can be disclosed. Natural consciousness claims that ‘Now is night’, not seeing that things are never permanent, but change. The example of night and day that Sextus first brought up and that Hegel employs as the major example in his analysis of sense-certainty in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is taken up in the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*; Hegel says furthermore that scepticism is directed against the being of sense-certainty which takes its being as the truth as such.¹⁶ Natural consciousness has the tendency not to remain with the things as they appear, but to attribute a Being to those things. Yet when consciousness takes something as the truth, it holds on to it and thus is bound to it; and since this truth is not stable, but changes and moves, consciousness loses its stability and its rest.¹⁷

In order to bring the soul to rest, consciousness thus has to refrain from judgements about the Being of things. *Ataraxia*, repose of the soul, is the goal of scepticism. Like other hellenistic schools, namely, Stoics and Epicureans, the Sceptics’ aim was to live a good and happy life, that is, to achieve *eudaimonia*. It was not their aim to found a science or to give satisfying answers to epistemological problems. The question thus is how to come to this *ataraxia*, and Pyrrhonism’s answer is the *epoché*, the suspension of judgement. It is not possible to achieve *ataraxia* right away by striving to get there, but rather, *ataraxia* follows by chance, as it were. In a passage Hegel quotes full length in his lectures, Sextus compares the sceptic way to the procedure of Apelles the painter who wanted to paint a horse and failed in painting the horse’s froth, and when he gave up and threw his sponge at the picture, the sponge produced the desired effect.¹⁸ In a similar way, the Sceptics hoped to achieve *ataraxia* by solving the problems of the things as they are appearing and the things as they are thought, and when they realized that they were unable to do this, they refrained from judgement altogether – and, as by chance, *ataraxia* followed. *Ataraxia* thus is not something we can strive for immediately; yet the *epoché* is something we can willfully carry out. Sextus describes our attitude after carrying out the *epoché*: The appearance of the object is not called into question since the appearance lies in ‘involuntary *pathos*’, so that none ‘disputes about whether the external object appears this way or that, but rather about whether it is such as it appears to be’.¹⁹ To use one of Sextus’s

examples, I grant that the honey appears to me to be sweet – but whether it *is* sweet has to remain open. Hegel says that sensuous beings were valid for the Skeptics, but as appearances according to which they led their life and not to take it as the truth.²⁰ Since the Skeptics' question was how to lead a good life, they needed some criterion for this, and so they held on to appearances and, particularly, to the habits and customs as they were instituted in their time.

However, the Skeptics did not make any statement about the Being of the objects, but just about their appearance – and this is exactly the sense of the *epoché*. Yet to carry out the *epoché*, to refrain from judgement about the Being of the appearing objects, requires a certain presupposition; namely, it presupposes that there is a gap between appearance and Being, between the thing as it appears and the thing as it *is*. We only have a choice in our judgement, a choice to either bridge that gap or restrict ourselves to appearance, if such a gap exists. In that sense, scepticism is not fully true to its intentions – for to presuppose a gap between concealed Being and disclosed appearance is a dogmatic presupposition that cannot come to the fore in the realm of appearance. This slight inconsequence of ancient scepticism is carried further by modern scepticism which is based on this gap and, furthermore, attributes truth to appearances; Hegel criticizes modern scepticism for claiming doubtless certainty of the facts of consciousness.²¹

For Hegel, ancient scepticism preserved the essence of the sceptic principle, and the tropes express this principle. In the earlier ten tropes, there is, according to Hegel, a lack of abstraction which becomes obvious in the fact that their diversity could be grasped under more simple general points of view. To support this view, Hegel quotes Sextus Empiricus who states that superordinate to the ten tropes are three, 'one based on what does the judging, another based on what is judged, and a third based on both'.²² Furthermore, Sextus explains that based on the judging subject are the first four tropes, which deal with the difference of animals, the differences among human beings, the difference of the senses and, finally, the difference of circumstances. The seventh and the tenth tropes – which concern the quantity and constitution of external objects and the ways of life, customs, laws and mystic beliefs – refer to what is judged. Based on both sides are the tropes number five, six, eight and nine which take up positions and locations, admixtures, relativity and the frequency or infrequency of occurrence.

Hegel says that the earlier tropes are directed against common sense and against sense-certainty,²³ and it is indeed possible to show a relation between the three groups of tropes and the three moments of sense-certainty. Sense-certainty first takes the object, the judged, as the truth; but since external objects change all the time and the only thing remaining in the change is the pure 'This', sense-certainty attributes the truth to the knowing or judging subject. Yet what I see is not what another I sees, and again sense-certainty which

was directed towards the singular arrives at the universal, the universal 'I'. In a final attempt, sense-certainty posits the whole of both sides, the relation of subject and object as its essence, but when sense-certainty points to a Now, this Now has already ceased to be in the act of pointing to it. Hegel says that the sceptic tropes are directed against the 'is', for 'the truth is not the dry "is", but genuine process'.²⁴ The analysis of sense-certainty comes to the same result: the fact that something *is* seems to be a fixed, permanent truth; but already in the simple 'is', there is a movement going on that we cannot evade.

While the ten earlier tropes are basically directed against the convictions of natural consciousness, the five later tropes oppose philosophy. They can be summed up shortly as dealing with disagreement, infinite regress, relativity, hypothesis and circularity. The Sceptics' most fundamental accusation against philosophy as it is represented by Dogmatics and Academics is that they either give a reason that rests on another presupposition and so on, so that one is led into an infinite regress, or they give a reason that itself grounds in what should follow from it, so that one is led into a circle. Hegel agrees with the sceptic criticism as far as it concerns the metaphysics of understanding (*Verstandesmetaphysik*) because those philosophies take something determined and finite for the absolute, which necessarily leads to contradiction. He claims, however, that speculative idealism resists this critique, as we will now see.

Hegel has put forward two arguments against scepticism. First, scepticism is merely negative, failing to notice the affirmative element that is inherent in negation; second, there is a contingency peculiar to scepticism. Both of those elements lead to scepticism not really being qualified as a science. Scepticism does not recognize that a negation has an affirmative element, that negation is in fact determinate negation, negation determined by what it negates. Therefore, scepticism is merely destructive and remains at the result as a negative;²⁵ it cannot progress since the constructive element is missing. Hegel also describes the movement of scepticism as that which 'annuls for itself all things, in which what is offered to it is quite contingent and indifferent'.²⁶ Hence, the two deficiencies of scepticism go together; scepticism takes up whatever just comes along and negates it. The ten earlier tropes might serve as examples for this procedure: Pyrrhonian scepticism as directed against natural consciousness takes up some contingent features and shows their contradictoriness, for example, human idiosyncrasies that lead to one person considering the shade to be cold, another considering the shade to be pleasant; it fails to detect the essential features of natural consciousness, show their contradictoriness and thus move on to a different shape of consciousness altogether.

If because of its mere negativity and its contingency scepticism does not meet the conditions of being a science, in what sense is it then that Hegel

regards the sceptic principle as inherent in its own philosophy? Is there not a contradiction between scepticism being unscientific and scepticism being a principle of speculative idealism as science? Hegel says that positive philosophy has the negative of scepticism in itself; 'it does not oppose it, nor is it outside of it, for skepticism is a moment in it' – but the negative 'in its truth, as it is not present in skepticism'.²⁷ The tension thus can be solved if we keep in mind that there is a distinction between scepticism as thoroughgoing scepticism and incomplete scepticism that has not yet fully recognized its principle. According to Hegel, both ancient and modern scepticisms are incomplete, but ancient scepticism is much closer to thoroughgoing scepticism than the modern one. How do thoroughgoing scepticism and incomplete scepticism relate to each other? They cannot be completely separated from each other since the thesis is that there is a common principle in both and not just an identity of the term; besides, it would not make sense then to talk about ancient scepticism being closer to the sceptic principle or about 'thoroughgoing' scepticism. Thoroughgoing scepticism is not a different scepticism, but a scepticism that went all the way in carrying out its principle. In Hegel's terminology, one might designate incomplete scepticism as scepticism 'in itself' in contrast to thoroughgoing scepticism as scepticism 'in and for itself'. In that sense, the relation of those two forms of scepticism can be compared to the relation of natural and philosophical consciousness which is expressed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*: We do not deal with two different consciousnesses; rather, if natural consciousness has grasped itself in its essence, it is philosophical consciousness.

Thoroughgoing scepticism is in possession of the principle of determinate negation which means that it yields in progression. Moreover, it is characterized by necessity instead of contingency, for it chooses its starting point deliberately instead of just taking up what presents itself. The starting point has to be the immediate – the immediate in its essential determinations. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, this immediate is natural consciousness, and in this sense, it is what the ten earlier tropes of scepticism are directed against. Yet Hegel first questions natural consciousness as to what its essential features are, and he comes to sense-certainty as the very first shape, sense-certainty which essentially claims about its object that it *is*. If we are to look at all the individual shapes natural consciousness can take on, there can never be completeness; but if we start off with what is identically the same in all of them, we have a common starting point. From this point on, 'the necessary progression and interconnection of the forms of the unreal consciousness will by itself bring to pass the *completion* of the series'.²⁸

Hence, thoroughgoing scepticism is scientific; furthermore, it is particularly qualified for providing a beginning of philosophy because of its presuppositionlessness: It does not bring about its own theory, but merely serves

as a principle to detect contradictions, negate them and move on from them. Since the sceptic principle is inherent in speculative idealism from the very start, Hegel's philosophy can resist the criticism which is put forward by the Sceptics against philosophy, as he points out in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*: 'But however much force these moments of its negative dialectic may have against the properly-speaking dogmatic knowledge of the understanding, its attacks against the true infinite of the speculative Idea are most feeble and unsatisfactory'.²⁹ For speculative idealism has the absolute negative in itself, it contains this determinate negative and its opposite. Or, put differently, since the sceptic principle is inherent in speculative idealism and since it developed according to this principle, it cannot be opposed by it.

Aside from the fact that the sceptic principle as Hegel raises it up in its own philosophy is, according to its own account, a realization of this principle that ancient scepticism did not yet achieve, there is another reason why Hegel has to divest the sceptic principle from its concrete form and take it up as a mere principle. This reason is grounded in the historicity of philosophy: Taking up ancient scepticism in its concrete form would presuppose that the level of consciousness has remained the same, but this is not the case and can never be the case. As far as ancient scepticism is concerned, there is a certain 'ease' of consciousness required which we no longer have.³⁰ The sceptic aim of achieving *ataraxia* means a return of consciousness; it returns to its simplicity.³¹ The sceptic thesis is that tension and restlessness evolve when consciousness becomes bound to something; this gets manifested in dogmatism. Once the uselessness of dogmatic sense-giving is realized, consciousness returns to its original stage; it is led by the appearing objects without inquiring into their Being, and takes up customs and habits that were handed down to it. This is no longer possible for us: The historical level of consciousness is not a stage of ease, and we are not surrounded by customs and habits that we could simply take up; the subjectivism of the modern era calls us to radically question all traditional habits such that there is no possibility for us to take them for granted. The historical development of consciousness went on, and we cannot find peace by falling back into a previous stage. Therefore, Hegel extracts the sceptic principle, carries it out to its full extent and integrates it into his own philosophy.

THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL *EPOCHÉ* IN HUSSERL

Husserl modified his response to the question as to how we can enter into phenomenology several times – sometimes substantially. Throughout his work, he considered the *epoché* to be a necessary component of an introduction to phenomenology; yet he altered the concept of the *epoché* repeatedly,

attributing different systematic positions and different roles to it. The main idea of the *epoché* shall be presented here roughly in the shape which Husserl gave to it in his *Ideas I*. The *epoché* is a suspension of judgement, specifically, a suspension of judgement regarding the being of the world. As a result of this suspension, phenomenology explores pure consciousness or rather the appearance of the world to consciousness.

Husserl's original concept of the *epoché* contains elements from Descartes's philosophy. Although Husserl criticizes the 'Cartesian way' into phenomenology later on, it is clear that the criticism is initially motivated by objections and misunderstandings from others. Husserl continues to maintain certain elements from the original idea of the *epoché* and presents it as a way which can be taken because he has indeed taken it. At the same time, his exploration of the historical lifeworld leads him to radical revisions of procedure which he barely thematizes explicitly, but which can be worked out in methodological terms, as we will see later (Chapter 8).

Husserl begins his 'Considerations Fundamental to Phenomenology' (*Phänomenologische Fundamentalbetrachtung*) in the natural attitude, and he pursues it in first person speech, in 'simple meditations'.³² A first point of contact with Descartes's *Meditations* is established. Departing from the statement 'I am conscious of a world', Husserl describes natural consciousness as it is straightforwardly directed towards objects. We are naturally convinced that objects exist, no matter whether we are conscious of them or not. Even in cases where we are mistaken, when we falsely posit the being of the object, our conviction regarding the being of objects in general is not shaken; we simply replace the mistaken judgements with a new, improved one. What this indicates is that every object given in perception is not isolated, but is surrounded by horizons that point to perceptual possibilities of other objects. Everything which I currently perceive points to further perceptual possibilities. These possibilities never stop; all horizons are embedded in the world as the universal horizon. The fundamental conviction of the natural attitude can thus be formulated in the judgement 'The world exists' or 'The world is'. However, this 'general thesis' (*Generalthesis*) remains implicit and is not usually thematized.

Husserl now requests that we perform a radical change and break with the natural attitude. The way in which he introduces this change of attitude is in the literal sense unmotivated: 'Instead of remaining in this attitude, we propose to alter it radically. What we now must do is to convince ourselves of the essential *possibility* of the alteration in question.'³³ Why we would perform this change of attitude is thus not thematized by Husserl in this text; he is merely concerned with showing the possibility of such change. It will turn out that Husserl criticizes this aspect of his *Ideas I* later on, discussing especially the question of how to motivate the *epoché*.

Yet Husserl's 'Introduction' to *Ideas I* and his procedure in the 'Fundamental Considerations' already show why the universal thesis of the natural attitude cannot remain active but becomes questionable. Since Husserl conceives of his philosophy as a science, several conditions need to be fulfilled. Philosophy as a science must be universal, that is, must pertain to everything there is. Furthermore, it must not accept any presuppositions without examining them. Yet the existence of the world can be doubted, as Descartes has shown; it is no secure basis for the science to be founded. We can thus no longer take the natural certainty of the world for granted but have to doubt it. The universal *epoché* is a specific kind of doubt; it refrains (Greek *epéchein* = refraining) from positing the being of the world. Any judgement about the existence of the world is suspended or left open. Husserl states that we 'bracket' (*einklamern*) or 'put out of action' (*ausschalten*) the general thesis of the natural attitude.³⁴ Husserl only performs the first step in Descartes's method of doubt, up to the refraining from opinion (Latin: *assensionem cohibere*).³⁵ He does not carry it out to its very end, the explicit negation of the existence of the world. Descartes negates the world in order to combat the habitual tendency on the part of natural consciousness to affirm being. Yet if we carry out the phenomenological *epoché*, we pass no judgement whatsoever about the world's being and consider the world entirely in its appearance.

Yet from Descartes, we know that we can be indubitably certain of the existence of one area which we can turn to for our phenomenological analyses: the *ego cogito* or pure consciousness. At the same time, Husserl criticizes Descartes for misconceiving the essence of consciousness. According to Husserl, Descartes saved 'a little tag-end (*Endchen*) of the world' with the apodictic pure ego.³⁶ We will not examine here whether this critique does justice to Descartes. A decisive difference is established by Husserl when he asserts his principle to bring nothing to expression which 'we ourselves do not "see"'.³⁷ That which Descartes brings into play even though it cannot be brought to intuition is particularly the existence of God which guarantees that the *ego cogito* can connect to an (existent) outer world. Husserl's philosophy does not require a God in this function because he leaves the question regarding the world's existence open and because he finds the entire wealth of the world in pure consciousness, albeit as phenomenon. For Descartes, only the certainty of the punctual *ego cogito* is given; 'he fails to see that the single acts occurring in consciousness are united through a phenomenal bind'.³⁸ Put differently, Descartes misses the horizontality of consciousness which opens an entire field of investigation and encompasses the whole world – as appearance.

After performing the universal *epoché*, our task is the examination of consciousness with all its content. The content of consciousness is the entire world and all objects, as phenomena. In the phenomenological attitude, we are no longer directed 'straightforwardly' towards objects but towards their

appearance in consciousness, to ‘how’ they appear. Husserl rightfully states that ‘we have not lost anything but rather gained the whole of absolute being’.³⁹ Motivation for the *epoché* is thus not a turn-away from the world but towards it; world and objects shall be considered in an untainted fashion. For this reason, all prejudices and ready-made opinions are bracketed, and we focus entirely on the way in which world and objects appear to us.⁴⁰ This reflection on appearances is the phenomenological reduction as the continuation and completion of the *epoché*. Husserl usually employs the concepts ‘*epoché*’ and ‘reduction’ interchangeably. Where he differentiates in terminology, the *epoché* refers to the moment of bracketing, of suspending the thesis about the world’s existence, whereas the reduction designates redirecting our attention towards the ways in which the phenomena appear to consciousness.⁴¹ For our theme, the *epoché* is particularly important since it describes the break with the natural attitude and thus the discontinuous character of the transition. Yet we need to bear in mind that reduction and *epoché* always belong together. In this study, *epoché* will designate the whole of *epoché* and reduction while emphasizing specifically the aspect of refraining or suspending.

We have thus seen how the move from the natural to the phenomenological attitude happens, in its briefest version. Husserl characterizes this way in retrospect as the Cartesian way since it takes its orientation from Descartes, as sketched here. According to Husserl, Descartes did not fully understand the meaning of transcendental philosophy as initiated by him; rather, he fell prey to the misunderstandings mentioned earlier. Husserl attributes these misunderstandings to the fact that Descartes ‘failed to fully learn his lesson from the *skepsis*’.⁴²

PROBLEMS WITH THE EPOCHÉ

Husserl’s phenomenological *epoché* strives to deepen the sceptical *epoché*; phenomenology does not pass a judgement about the relation between being and appearance but merely describes the manifold ways in which things appear to us. But there are some problems surrounding the *epoché* that should be discussed here because some of them emerge from misunderstandings whereas others call for the kinds of transformations we will see happening in Chapters 5 and 8.

(a) The Problem of Consciousness

One of the problems emerging from the Cartesian way lies in the fact that Husserl here designates consciousness as a necessary and absolute being, thus passing judgement on the being of consciousness. In order to be consistent,

Husserl would need to leave the question concerning the being of consciousness open and restrict his examinations to the way in which consciousness appears to us. In examining the appearance of consciousness, it would then be necessary to ask how it is that consciousness appears to us as an absolute and necessary being, that is, how the apodictic being of consciousness is constituted.

However, Husserl wants to found phenomenology as a science; transcendental consciousness is meant to serve as the foundation for this new science. Fortunately, it is not necessary for phenomenology to claim the absolute being of consciousness, even if Husserl wants to hold on to the idea of the universal *epoché*. It is sufficient to show that transcendental consciousness appears in a fundamentally different way than the world. The universal *epoché* refers explicitly to the universal thesis of natural consciousness about the being of the world. The turn to transcendental consciousness and the investigation of the world's constitution in it is possible if transcendental consciousness is no object in the world. Transcendental consciousness is the flipside of the world, as if consciousness and world were two sides of the same coin. Consciousness and world are an encompassing whole. There cannot be two totalities but only one, considered from two perspectives, as it were.

This does not mean that consciousness and world fall into one. It is an essential component of our consciousness of world that it appears as something which transcends consciousness. The phenomenological task consists in clarifying the meaning of this transcendence by going back to consciousness. We will see later how the problem of consciousness becomes resolved when Husserl develops an introduction to phenomenology from the lifeworld (Chapter 8). The status of consciousness will turn out to be more complicated than it first seems; once phenomenological analysis considers history, it has to realize that consciousness is also historical and cannot acquire a standpoint 'above' the world.

(b) The Paradox of Subjectivity

Husserl himself criticizes in retrospect that the talk of pure consciousness as 'residue' (*Residuum*) which remains after the 'annihilation of the world' should have been avoided.⁴³ The problematic expression 'annihilation of the world' is unnecessary as well; the methodological sense of this thought-experiment consisted in showing that pure consciousness has a fundamentally different mode of givenness than the world and is also different from the empirical ego. It is sufficient to bear this distinction in mind as a difference in the mode of givenness. In Husserl's later texts, this distinction occurs under the heading of a 'circle' or 'paradox' which can, however, be resolved. In the *Crisis*, Husserl formulates the problem as follows: 'How can

a component part of the world, its human subjectivity, constitute the whole world ...?'⁴⁴

The apparent paradox is resolved by conceding that a human being is subject for the world and object in the world – yet the latter, the human being as embodied, as person and so on, is considered as phenomenon after carrying out the *epoché*. The question is how the human being as object is constituted by the transcendental ego, 'considered purely as the ego-pole of his acts, habitualities, and capacities'.⁴⁵ The empirical ego with character and name is thus substantially different from the transcendental ego, and when we usually speak of the 'I', we mean the empirical ego. The transcendental ego can be accessed only indirectly, as the correlate of objects and world; when we try to reflect on it, we always come a little bit too late.⁴⁶

(c) Partial and Universal Epoché

In the *Crisis*, Husserl explains a decisive disadvantage of the Cartesian introduction. The Cartesian way is short, but 'while it leads to the transcendental ego in one leap, as it were, it brings this ego into view as apparently empty of content, since there can be no preparatory explication; so one is at a loss, at first, to know what has been gained by it'.⁴⁷ If we bracket the world as a whole, this results in an emptiness of content – albeit merely an apparent one – which has to be filled through phenomenological analyses.

An alternative procedure which Husserl employs especially in the lectures on *First Philosophy* replaces the universal *epoché* at first with a partial *epoché*, relating to specific acts of consciousness. Husserl maintains that the request of abandoning all prejudices is 'a reasonable and necessary request, but as an initial request, necessarily also entirely vague'.⁴⁸ By undertaking individual *epochai* – such as suspending judgement about the being of a particular perceptual object in order to focus on how it appears, or the examination of past and future consciousness – the potential achievements of the *epoché* become obvious.

Why is the universal *epoché* even needed? Would it not be less problematic and easier to perform an *epoché* with respect to the specific area or region which shall be investigated, such as the region of spatiotemporal objects, of artworks, natural objects? Husserl would support such a possibility as an intermediate stage. In the end, however, he aims to found a science which is concerned with everything there is and which would be capable of universal statements. The universal *epoché* remains necessary in order to engage in transcendental phenomenology in the genuine sense; otherwise, phenomenology cannot relate to the world. The world as horizon from which objects come to appear provides the connection between these objects, thus accounting for the unified rather than fragmented character of our experience.

(d) The Problem of Motivation

It is an essential feature of the natural attitude that it is self-sufficient and does not by itself call for a change. Husserl thus has difficulties to account for the question as to what would motivate us to perform the phenomenological *epoché*, also given that the benefits of phenomenological analyses are hard to explain to the natural attitude. While this is a problem which all philosophy faces, phenomenology needs to take the issue particularly seriously because it wants to start without presuppositions and without basing itself on other philosophical theories.

In his late philosophy, Husserl engages in historical reflections which allow him to confront the problem of motivation. On the one hand, he asks how philosophy originated in ancient Greece, and he is led back to the response which Plato and Aristotle gave regarding the beginning of philosophy: wonder. Husserl expands on this response by liking it to the encounter with the alien which may have instigated wonder for the Greeks and may also do so for us today (Chapter 6). Furthermore, he develops a new introduction to phenomenology starting from the lifeworld which allows us to look for motivations within the world. One important reason to enter into phenomenology can be found in an experience of crisis which arises as a crisis of the sciences, but turns out to permeate the lifeworld as a whole (Chapters 6 and 9). Husserl also acknowledges that the *epoché* might not necessarily be the first step of phenomenology, but might be prepared for by reflections on history or the lifeworld; phenomenology might accordingly proceed in a ‘zigzag’ fashion. It will be interesting to consider, at the end, how such zigzag movements could be combined with a more flexible form of dialectics. But before considering further methodological developments which will take Husserl closer to Hegel, we need to consider some phenomenological analyses: of perception.

NOTES

1. Hegel, HiPhi II, 359/330.
2. Hegel, Vol. 2, 247f.
3. Hegel, Vol. 2, 240.
4. Hegel, PhS, 36/50.
5. Hegel, PhS, 159/123. On the issue of the double function of scepticism in the *Phenomenology*, cf. Ulrich Claesges, ‘Das Doppelgesicht des Skeptizismus in Hegels *Phänomenologie des Geistes*’ (‘The Double Face of Scepticism in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*’), in *Skeptizismus und spekulatives Denken in der Philosophie Hegels* (*Scepticism and Speculative Thought in Hegel’s Philosophy*), ed. H. F. Fulda et al. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1996), 117–134.
6. Hegel, PhS, 77/54. Heidegger elucidates the fact that there is no contradiction in the statement that what we need to *do* is exactly *leave* our ideas *aside* – for leaving something aside, refraining from something is exactly an activity, but an activity we are not

used to, and thus a difficult one. Cf. Martin Heidegger, 'Hegels Begriff der Erfahrung', in *Holzwege*, ed. F.-W. von Herrmann. Gesamtausgabe Vol. 5 (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1977), 190. ('Hegel's Concept of Experience', in *Off the Beaten Track*, transl. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002], 139.)

7. For further clarification of the *epoché* in Hegel and its similarities and differences to the phenomenological *epoché* in Husserl, cf. Kenley R. Dove, 'Die Epoché der Phänomenologie des Geistes' ('The Epoché of the Phenomenology of Spirit'), in *Hegel-Studien (Hegel Studies)* 11 (Bonn 1974), 605–621.

8. Cf. Klaus Düsing, 'Die Bedeutung des antiken Skeptizismus für Hegels Kritik der sinnlichen Gewißheit' ('The Significance of Ancient Scepticism for Hegel's Critique of Sense-Certainty'), *Hegel-Studien (Hegel Studies)*, 8, 119–130.

9. Cf. Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus logicos*, II, 103, and *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, in *The Skeptic Way – Sextus Empiricus's Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. Translated and Introduction written by Benson Mates (New York/Oxford, 1996), II, 109f.

10. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, transl. Hugh Treddenick (Cambridge: Loeb Classical Library, 1989), 1010 a 12.

11. Hegel, Enc. I, § 78.

12. Ibid.

13. Hegel, HiPhi II 367/338.

14. Sextus Empiricus, 'Outlines of Pyrrhonism', in *The Skeptic Way – Sextus Empiricus's Outlines of Pyrrhonism*. Translated and Introduction written by Benson Mates (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1.

15. Hegel, HiPhi II, 358/328.

16. Hegel, HiPhi II, 372/344.

17. Hegel, HiPhi II 369/342.

18. See Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 12; Hegel, HiPhi II, 370/342.

19. Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 11.

20. Hegel, HiPhi II, 366/337.

21. Hegel, HiPhi II 375/347; Hegel, Vol. 2, 220ff.

22. Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, 14.

23. Hegel, HiPhi II, 372ff./343ff.

24. Hegel, HiPhi II, 380/351.

25. Hegel, HiPhi II, 360/330.

26. Hegel, HiPhi II, 401/371.

27. Hegel, HiPhi II, 359/330.

28. Hegel, PhS, 37/50.

29. Hegel, HiPhi II, 397/367.

30. Cf. Hans Friedrich Fulda, *Das Problem einer Einleitung in Hegels Wissenschaft der Logik* (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1965), 51.

31. Hegel, HiPhi II, 371/342.

32. Husserl, Hua III, 57/48.

33. Husserl, Hua III, 63/53, my emphasis.

34. Husserl, Hua III, 65/54.

35. Descartes, *Meditatio I*, n. 10.

36. Husserl, Hua I, 63/24.

37. Husserl, Hua I, 64/24.

38. Ludwig Landgrebe, *Der Weg der Phänomenologie (The Way of Phenomenology)* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1963), 85.

39. Husserl, Hua III, 119/113.

40. Dan Zahavi describes this important aspect very well: 'The execution of the *epoché* ..., when understood correctly, does not imply an eclipse of the world, but a *suspension of the natural attitude's assumption concerning the mode of its existence*' (Dan Zahavi, *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity. A Response to the Linguistic-Pragmatic Critique* [Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001], 3, my italics).

41. Klaus Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik (The Living Present. The Question of the Transcendental Ego's Mode of Being in Edmund Husserl on the Basis of the Problem of Time)* (The Hague: Kluwer, 1966), 17.

42. Husserl, Hua VII, 64. See also Sonja Rinofer-Kreidl, 'Die Entdeckung des Erscheinens. Was phänomenologische und skeptische Epoché unterscheidet' ('The Discovery of Appearing. What Distinguishes Phenomenological and Sceptical Epoché'), *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie (General Journal of Philosophy)*, 27, no. 1 (2002): 19–40.

43. Husserl, Hua VIII, 432.

44. Husserl, Hua VI, 183/179.

45. Husserl, Hua VI, 187/183.

46. This necessary delay is discussed further in Chapter 7.

47. Husserl, Hua VI, 158/155.

48. Husserl, Hua VIII, 165.

Chapter 2

The Perceptual World

But it is not as a ‘one’ that it excludes others from itself, for to be a ‘one’ is the universal relating of self to self, and the fact that it is a ‘one’ rather makes it like all others; it is through its *determinateness* that the thing excludes others.

Hegel, PhS, 100/73

External perception is a constant pretension to accomplish something that, by its very nature, it is not in a position to accomplish. Thus, it harbors an essential contradiction, as it were.

Husserl, Hua XI, 3/39

We will begin with a realm that is very familiar to us: normal perception of spatio-temporal objects. But this apparently simple level actually proves quite enigmatic. It moves us to a question for which we think we will receive an answer from the sciences if we move one level up, as it were. But it turns out that the only way to shed light on the situation is to move down, towards a realm more fundamental than that of an object with properties: mere sensibility, or what Hegel calls sense-certainty, Husserl passivity. Hegel starts his *Phenomenology of Spirit* with sense-certainty, but, as we will see (Chapter 4), it is a particularly difficult realm to access. So let us begin with what has the appearance of being simple.

What is the character of perception? One peculiarity of perception is that we perceive a unitary object while perceiving manifold aspects, properties, and so on, of this object. Both Hegel and Husserl regarded the tension between unity and manifold an essential feature of perception. However, the character of this manifold nature of perception shows up in different ways: Hegel examines the properties of the object, while Husserl thematizes its

modes of appearance; the difference between properties and modes of appearance needs to be examined.

Moreover, both of them share the insight that perception is an interplay of the perceiving subject and the perceived object. They both also assert that the characteristics of unity and manifold belong to both sides and cannot be explained if attributed to one side only. Thereby, both Husserl and Hegel imply that the subject is actively involved in perception. Perception is never pure reception; it always involves thinking and, accordingly, activities of the understanding. The understanding can unify or synthesize but can also differentiate.

HEGEL ON IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE

Hegel writes in the *Encyclopaedia* that perception grasps ‘the context of things’.¹ It is essential for perception that a thing comes into relief in relation to other things and thereby acquires its distinctive nature. Although the thing’s relation to other things is important throughout Hegel’s description of perception, the full significance of this aspect surfaces only on the third level of perception, as we will see. The tension of ‘one’ and ‘also’ permeates the entire chapter on perception in *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The thing is ‘one’, and, at the same time, it is a manifold of properties, an ‘also’. To take up Hegel’s example, we find that the salt, the ‘one thing’ salt, is white and also tart, also cubical, and so on. The perceived object is thus finally determined by the conflict of unity and manifold. The question remains as to how unity and multiplicity are combined in perception.

According to Hegel, we find that, in describing perception, we try to evade the tension of specificity and universality by distinguishing between different ‘respects’ (*Hinsichten*) and by distributing specificity and universality among object and consciousness. In the end, this endeavour has to fail, no matter how many different respects perception features, for perception does not solve or sublate the contradiction but merely shifts and distributes it. It will turn out that contradiction calls for thinking. What is refuted in the analysis of perception is the thesis that human cognition can be reduced to passive, merely receptive perception. Perception includes, to employ Husserl’s terms, always already the accomplishments of synthesis.

The perception of the thing with many properties encompasses three levels, according to Hegel’s analysis. First, it turns out that specificity and universality occur in the thing as well as in its properties. The perceiving subject remains uninvolved and merely receptive on this first level. Yet when the truth of the object turns out to be its self-sameness, the making of distinctions is attributed to consciousness. This second possibility of dealing with the tension between specificity and universality leads to the problem that the

individual thing now cannot be set apart from other things. The result is that the thing always stands in a context with other things and is thus 'one' as well as 'also' – in a way that only the understanding can comprehend.

As an exemplary case of Hegelian dialectics, we will now trace out the chapter on perception in its major three steps. Since this analysis moves within the realm of consciousness, we deal with two sides, consciousness and its object (which is considered alien by consciousness). The object appears to be the component that is essential and persistent, indifferent to being perceived or not. Perception's object is characterized by Hegel as the thing with many properties. The thing's property is a universal: Whiteness is at the same time the salt's whiteness and the snow's whiteness, and yet neither one nor the other. The sensible is preserved as a property, that is, as a sensible universal. This yields a first determination of the thing's essence as 'medium', as 'also': The salt is white and also tart, also cubical, and so on. The thing's properties are originally indifferent to each other, yet in order for the properties to be determinate properties (and, thus, in order for the thing to be a determinate thing), the properties have to delimit themselves from others by excluding them. Hence the thing is 'not merely an *"also"*, an indifferent unity, but a *"one"* as well, a unity which *excludes* an other (*ausschließende Einheit*)'.²

The tension between specificity and universality is to be found in the property as well as in the thing. For instance, if we take a close look we find that the *property* is the determinate single property that distinguishes the thing from others (e.g. this particular whiteness). At the same time, the whiteness is what this thing shares with other things. Just because the salt is white, the whiteness is not yet given away. As being white, the thing stands in a relation of uniformity or similarity with some things, in a relationship of contrast with others; it is the universal that occurs in this thing as well as in others. The *thing* in turn is, on the one hand, 'also', universality of many properties, on the other hand 'one', namely, this particular single thing as opposed to others. It is this last feature that makes it possible to take self-identity (*Sichselbstgleichheit*)³ as a criterion for truth: It is the thing's identity with itself to which I can always return. Persistence or the possibility of coming back to the one and same object thus serves as the essential feature of perception in Hegel if the perception is to be (objectively) true. We will see that it is the necessary condition for objectivity in Husserl.

If there is a criterion for perception's truth, then perception can also be false or make mistakes. And indeed, already the title of the chapter, 'Perception: or the Thing and Deception' (*Die Wahrnehmung oder das Ding und die Täuschung*), suggests that perception essentially includes the possibility of deception. Perception can be in possession of manifold, of richness – but it has to pay the price that there can be a 'mistake' (*ein "Sich-vergreifen"*); that is, that perception takes the object for something else than it is.⁴ The

possibility of deception discloses the fact that perception does not just take up what is given to it; rather, it selects, it is directed and it makes connections. Otherwise it would not be possible to have the richness of perceptual things. If perception were to have everything at once, it would have nothing. Yet this possibility of deception already points to the fact that perceiving is closer to understanding than it seems – it is already in transition. At the same time, deception is a peculiar phenomenon that we can only talk about in the mode of possibility. When we talk about actual deception, it has already passed.

All deception points to its counterpart, the object's self-identity and persistence. In order to preserve this feature of the object (and thus, its truth), perceiving takes all differences onto itself. We have arrived at the second level of perception. While previously the tension between unity and universality was carried out in the object alone, the side of consciousness now comes into play; distinguishing between different respects is supposed to resolve the tension. The initial two attempts at explaining how perception functions thus move between the two options, object and consciousness, and try to account for our experience of perception by ascribing identity and difference to these two sides. We already anticipate that the first two steps of the dialectic are not going to be successful, but we need to see a bit more closely how the second position fails.

The second step attributes all universality to consciousness since the object first presents itself as one, and this simple identity should be preserved. The object is the exclusive and excluding 'one'. Yet since the one object exhibits many properties, it seems that it is ultimately the individual property (e.g. the whiteness of the object) to which the unified character and truth should be attributed. Perception has been returned to the beginning, and, yet, the starting point of the experience is no longer the same. Rather, it has become obvious that perception necessarily reverts to itself and is thus essentially reflective. Consciousness returns to itself and recognizes that it constitutes one side of the perceptual process. At the same time, it realizes that the untruth occurring in perception is the contribution of consciousness. But as it becomes aware of this untruth and undertakes corrections, consciousness is also the source of truth.

On the basis of these results about itself and its object, consciousness starts over again and describes more precisely how the object is 'one' and consciousness is an 'also': The object first presents itself as one, and, in order to keep up its simple identity, the universality is attributed to consciousness. The thing is one, and it is white 'only to *our* eyes', tart only 'to *our* tongue' and so on.⁵ One might think that Hegel here is taking our corporeality into account (as Husserl will in his account of kinaestheses), but Hegel is dealing

only with an intermediate stage. The special character of our lived body in its peculiar position between consciousness and objects is, in the end, not important for Hegel.⁶

If all universality and difference belong to consciousness, there is the decisive problem that the thing cannot be distinguished from other things: 'But it is not as a "one" that it excludes others from itself, for to be a "one" is the universal relating of self to self, and the fact that it is a "one" rather makes it like all others; it is through its *determinateness* that the thing excludes others.'⁷ This is an essential insight: Being one is shared by all things and thus precisely cannot express its thingly character, for being a thing is to be a determinate thing. Its identity does not suffice to distinguish the thing from other things. We need to focus on the thing's specificity and distinction from other things to extract its unique character.

The third approach, therefore, takes the thing as the whole of those two moments and tries to place the tension as a whole in the object instead of distributing it. 'The thing is a "one" (*Das Ding ist Eins*), reflected into itself; it is *for itself*, but it is also *for an other*; and, moreover, it is an *other* on its own account, just *because* it is for an other.'⁸ Thus, there is again a distinction of respects, yet this time not with regard to object and consciousness, but with regard to several objects. The contradiction is distributed among two objects: For itself, the salt is simple and one, and only does the other that is added, say, the sugar, make the salt being an 'also' of properties, an other. The unity of the thing gets 'disturbed' only by other objects; each object becomes an other through others.

But, in spite of this successful distribution, the difference finally also affects the single thing, since each object is a different one and has this difference in itself. Therefore, another attempt of distinction and distribution is made, this time with regard to validities: the multiplicity is *necessary* for the thing but at the same time *unessential* for it. Yet this approach points to difficulties right away – for how can something necessary be unessential? It first seems that being 'one' is essential to the thing and belongs to it in so far as it is not in relation to other things. Yet the thing is 'one' exactly when it relates to other things, and, thereby, it is the essential property that causes its undoing and vanishing. The result is that the distinction of respects and the distribution of unity and universality fail: 'The object is *in one and the same respect the opposite of itself: it is for itself, so far as it is for another, and it is for another, so far as it is for itself*.'⁹ The object is determinate and self-identical only in so far as it distinguishes itself from others and excludes others from itself. It is only by coming into relief from the background of such things that the object is fulfilling the conditions we pose with regard to a perceptual thing.¹⁰

HUSSERL AND THE THING IN ITSELF

The insight formulated poignantly by Hegel, namely, that an object's self-identity is not sufficient to account for its difference, is the reason that Husserl needs to revise his account of the object's identity. As we will see, Husserl cannot posit the identical object as the pure X in abstraction from all predicates; rather, the identical X has to be the completely determined object, the object with all its properties, even if this completely determined object is an idea that can never be achieved. We have to keep in mind, however, that the object's modes of appearance in Husserl cannot be identified with the thing's properties in Hegel. There is a similarity as far as the character of manifold is concerned. Yet the properties in Hegel are determinacies that already involve more thoughts, so to speak. In other words, they are more general and more abstract than the modes of appearance in Husserl. The front side of this cup, although it is indeed one of the many aspects of the cup, belongs to this particular cup only. The salt's whiteness, on the other hand, is that which the salt shares with the snow, for example, and yet the whiteness of the salt is not exactly the whiteness of the snow and certainly not what we call whiteness in general. The properties of the thing lead to the question of universality and specificity which determines the entire chapter.

The realization that a spatio-temporal object – and it is with the perception of such an object that we are concerned here – is never given from all sides, but in a one-sided fashion, leads to the most important questions regarding perception. How do we perceive a unified object even though it is always only partially given? How are the manifold modes of appearance connected to the unity of the object? How is a unified object constituted for us? These questions occupied Husserl again and again; they are decisive for his phenomenology since perception represents the paradigm example of experience for him. All memories, expectations, idealizations and so on, point back to perception. The realization that perception is necessarily perspectival and that the object is always given inadequately belongs to Husserl's most significant insights.¹¹

The essential problem of perception thus consists in the tension of unity and manifoldness. Natural consciousness is not directed at the manifold modes of appearance but at the unitary object to which it attributes a being-in-itself independently of consciousness. How is this in-itself constituted? A motivation for positing a being-in-itself of the object can be found in the fact that there is an excess or surplus of modes through which the object is given. Our experience has shown that the stream of appearances does not come to an end; one mode of the object's givenness always points to another. An object does not come to fulfilment in a single mode of appearance but confronts me with the request to study it more closely, to turn and twist it and

so on. Since the object constantly holds plenty of further modes of givenness in stock and persists throughout the respective mode of givenness, natural consciousness attributes a being-in-itself to it – a being beyond the respective givenness for consciousness.

What is the status of this object in-itself, of this (non-Kantian) *Ding an sich*? What is the relation between the manifold modes of appearance and the unity of the thing-in-itself? Husserl draws on different terms to designate that which remains identical in the object and comprises its identity. What is called ‘objective sense’ and ‘identical core’ in *Ideas I* corresponds basically to the in-itself, object itself or substrate X in *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*. The fundamental problem is, in both cases, the tension between manifold and identity. After a short discussion of Husserl’s presentation in *Ideas I*, we shall see in more detail how the conception of the thing-in-itself develops in *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis* since the new conception resolves some problems of the earlier description.

In *Ideas I*, Husserl distinguishes substantially between three dimensions, in ways that first appear confusing. First, there is the object ‘as such’, the ‘bearer’ (*Träger*) of the predicates, the identical X. Second, Husserl examines the object in the ‘how’ of its determinations and thus as the bearer along with the predicates, so to speak. Third, there is the object in the ‘how’ of its modes of givenness, which is an extension of the second meaning. Modes of givenness include such distinctions as the distance or closeness of the object and the question whether it is possible or actual, perceived or remembered. The third dimension is thus the most encompassing one; we need to bear in mind that an essential difference exists between determinations (predicates: blue, big, etc.) and modes of givenness (perceived, remembered, imagined, etc.) which designates the way in which the object is given to me. All of these distinctions ultimately do not refer to the object of the ‘transcendent world’ (Hua III, § 88) but to the object as perceived, to the objective pole as the intentional correlate of my consciousness: that which my consciousness is directed at (as an appearance). Husserl calls this correlate the ‘noematic content’ or the ‘noema’. The *noema* ‘apple tree’ differs from the apple tree in the garden in that I can still presentify (*vergegenwärtigen*) it (by way of phantasy or recollection) even after the apple tree in the garden has been cut down. A *noema* cannot be cut down, nor can it burn down.

With respect to the object as *noema*, Husserl undertakes the three fundamental distinctions listed earlier. These distinctions are motivated by the question of identity in change. The perceived apple tree differs from the recollected apple tree, and yet there is an identity. The mode of givenness changes, but the ‘noematic sense’ remains identical. Furthermore, even the ‘noematic sense’ can change and yet retain its identical ‘central point’. The apple tree can change its determinations; it can change in colour, size and

so on, while an identical bearer of the determinations remains. This bearer or identical point can be distinguished, but not separated from its determinations and cannot be perceived in the strict sense. Since Husserl distinguishes between different layers of the *noema*, he speaks of the 'core' (*Kern*) or 'noematic core'. Within the core, a central core can be distinguished (the bearer, the X), and in reverse direction, we arrive at the full *noema* if we add to the central core not just the determinations but also the modes of givenness.¹²

In *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*, the same problematic is described somewhat differently. It is essential to perception, so Husserl points out that 'in the sense of concordantly and synthetically progressing perception, we can always distinguish between an unceasingly changing sense and an identical sense running through the changing sense'.¹³ A particular sense belongs to each phase of the perception; the perceptual object is given in a particular way. However, running through this constantly 'new' flowing sense, there is 'the unity of the substrate x (*Substrat x*), which holds sway in a steady coinciding, and which is determined ever more richly',¹⁴ namely, there always exists the unity of the object itself. If I smell and taste my favourite dish, it is given to me in a different way than when I remember having eaten it with a friend or when I go shopping (recalling the ingredients in order to be able to cook this same dish) – and yet it is the same identical dish in all those cases. But even when this dish is intuitively given to me in the presence, it is given to me from a certain perspective. For instance, I see the front side, but not the back, or perhaps I cut up the dish into small portions and am aware of its identity while I am doing this.

What is it that runs through the flow of perceptions? Is it one identical point that is left when one abstracts from all properties? Husserl seems to hold this view in *Ideas I* when he says that the identical is 'the pure X in abstraction from all predicates'.¹⁵ However, Husserl is conscious of the fact that an X of this kind is an abstraction indeed, an abstraction in the literal sense – namely that which remains when all properties of the object are removed from consideration. What remains in this case is merely an idea and therefore nothing real. One problem with such an idea is that it lacks any determinacy which is required for the constitution of an object, for example, its spatiality and materiality. Such an idea is not very helpful in analysing the nature of perception. Another, even more important problem is the fact that an X being the result of withdrawing all properties does not hold any clues for distinguishing one particular thing from another. Yet perception is precisely the ability to perceive many things in their differences.

The manner in which Husserl determines the identical X in his *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis* overcomes these problems. Husserl transforms the conception of the X and replaces it with a new idea that

takes all determinations into account instead of abstracting from them. The substrate X, the object itself, is 'everything that the process of perception and all further possible perceptual processes determine in it and would determine in it'.¹⁶ This identical objective sense is designated as an idea, an idea that lies in infinity, 'the idea of the completely determined object, of the object that would be determined through and through, known through and through, ... and where the full determination itself would be devoid of any *plus ultra* with respect to what is still to be determined'.¹⁷ This idea lies in infinity because the object is never absolutely given in perception; perception of spatio-temporal objects is necessarily inadequate. In actual perception, there is always a *plus ultra*. This is to say that a more accurate determination is always possible. Moreover, there always exists the possibility of deception and redetermination through crossing out. However, the idea of the completely determined object plays an essential role in the process of perception: It guides the perceptual process. In order to avoid misunderstandings on this point, one has to examine how such an idea can be constituted and how it can function as guiding the process.

Rudolf Bernet explains how Husserl's conception of the 'teleologically anticipated adequate givenness of the object' is the solution of a paradox.¹⁸ According to Bernet, the paradox is to be found in the fact that, on the one hand, an adequate givenness of the object is essentially impossible and, on the other hand, every appearance anticipates this adequate givenness or the thing-in-itself in a teleological manner.¹⁹ The goal of the perceptual process thus cannot be the adequate givenness of the object, but the closer determination of the thing in the process itself. Yet this process does not unfold in a blind way; we want to perceive ever more closely, and the adequate givenness or the thing-in-itself functions as the guiding idea. Husserl writes in *Ideas I* that the adequate givenness of the thing is present in the form of an idea, namely, as an idea that can be 'intellectually seen'. The idea of an infinite continuum of appearances is 'not itself an infinity', and the 'intellectually seen givenness of the *idea* of this infinity' is not only possible but even necessary.²⁰ Without this idea, the unity of the object that pertains through the perceptual process could not be explained.

The thing-in-itself must thus not be misconstrued as something ready-made existing prior to the perceptual process; rather, it is constructed during the process of perceiving. In and through the multiplicity of appearances and by returning to this multiplicity, the thing-in-itself is determined, yet it is not identical with this multiplicity since it is a unified idea.²¹ In perception, we anticipate the ideal of an adequately given object, despite the fact that we never reach it; this object provides the perceptual process with implicit guidelines according to which appearances point to other appearances, offering closer and closer determination. The fundamental structure of this process is

the interplay of intention and fulfilment/disappointment.²² It is this structure of the perceptual process that allows Husserl to characterize perception as 'horizontal'.

OBJECTS AND HORIZONS

That a thing always occurs in a context and it can only be a thing against the background of this context is a thought shared by Hegel and Husserl. What distinguishes Hegel's argumentation from Husserl's conception of the perceptual horizon is the fact that Hegel focuses on the *other things* with their properties and categorical determinations, while Husserl puts the emphasis on the referential character of the *horizon* which connects the things with each other – such that the thing in question always has a privileged position and such that we can explain how it is that we can go from one thing to another. Thereby, Hegel, as well as Husserl, encounters the question as to how it is that an object does not become blurred and starts dissolving into its surroundings. Both Hegel and Husserl arrive at the unifying function of consciousness. However, another difference is that Husserl's description of the horizon takes into account that the implications are continuous (that there is an empty horizon about which we only know that implications from the perceived things lead into it, but which is indeterminate in such a way that already the idea that it would consist of further and further objects does not meet its character). The question of an infinite process of continuation is not an issue for Hegel on the level of the finite consciousness of perception.

For an initial account of horizons, we can turn to Husserl's 'Considerations Fundamental to Phenomenology'²³ in *Ideas I*, which we also consulted in the previous chapter. At first, Husserl examines the horizontal nature of perception as it entails, first, that which is actually perceived and, second, a region of that which is 'more or less clearly co-present and determinate' and finally, a 'misty and never fully determinable horizon' in which the world is prescribed only according to its form, empty of all determination of content. These levels can easily be misunderstood in terms of a mere spatial succession: that which is closest to me, for example, the desk, is currently actually present, followed by the spatial surroundings of the desk as co-present. The 'misty and never fully determinable horizon' would then be further away from me than everything, which I could indeed move to and reach at this very moment. But this is not the sense of Husserl's distinction; proximity is not merely spatial closeness. A note on the table can remind me of the friend who is currently situated far away and who might nevertheless be more present to me than the waste basket under the desk that I hit with my legs because I forgot that it is there.²⁴

Everything which comes to appearance is surrounded and permeated by an intentional empty horizon. In the context of genetic phenomenology, which investigates how horizons emerge, Husserl explains that this emptiness 'is not a nothingness, but an emptiness to be filled-out; it is a determinable indeterminacy'.²⁵ 'Horizon' thus designates a context of references which opens up, beginning from that which is currently present. We can distinguish between an inner horizon which provides further aspects of one and the same object and an outer horizon which contains references from the current object to further objects and everything in the closer or wider proximity.

Perception is thus never perception of an isolated object since this object is situated in a context and points beyond itself. The unity of an object is then constituted in and through the connections between the object's modes of appearance, connections that come about through associative links (which, in turn, presuppose the temporal stream of consciousness, as we will see more closely in Chapter 5). I do not turn towards the backside of my cup in a mechanical manner, because the front of the cup points to it and prefigures it by means of uniformity and similarity. The referential implications are that which connect the object's modes of appearance – a connection that can be described in terms of a question and an affirming/denying answer or in terms of intention and fulfilment/disappointment. The unattainable ideal is complete givenness of all sides and perspectives, and this ideal guides the perceptual process as a unified thing-in-itself.

Yet how is it we turn our attention towards a particular object? To gain insights into the nature of attention, it is essential to understand the perceptual process as an interplay, as a 'constitutive duet'²⁶ of object and subject. Husserl designates the object's 'enticement' or 'call' as an 'affective force'.²⁷ This affective force does not function in the fashion of a natural causality, but rather as a call coming to me from the side of the object – a call which I can take up but do not have to. However, there is not just one affective force that calls me in any given situation, but, rather, there are several objects that exert affective forces and call me to turn towards them. Husserl in this context talks about a 'rivalry',²⁸ in which, for example, the 'phenomenon of concealment' (*Verdeckung*) can occur.²⁹ A necessary selection and exclusion takes place. How powerful the affective force of a particular object is in this rivalry might be a matter of the force's intensity (loud noise can drown out or eclipse silent music), or a contrast might increase the affective force (light colours come to relief in front of a dark background). A perceptual situation is, of course, much more complex than these examples show; it is influenced by manifold factors such as memories of preceding similar situations as well as interests and expectations.

The perceptual process is thus essentially determined by the fact that there are always both sides involved (object and subject, perceived thing and

perceiver). It is not the case that one side is the determining one and that the other one is merely receptive. Natural consciousness tends to attribute the essential role in the perceptual process to the object, as Hegel in his analysis of perception also emphasizes. One of Husserl's decisive contributions to the disclosure of the essential role of the perceiving subject lies in his analysis of the phenomenon of 'kinaestheses'.³⁰ My movements (Greek: *kinesis*) as bodily movements are always involved in perception (Greek: *aisthesis*). Natural consciousness does not recognize this involvement since it normally takes place habitually, without me actively taking part. Yet when this normal course is inhibited or disturbed, I become aware of my involvement.³¹ For example, if I hurt my neck, I realize to what extent my vision is restricted all of a sudden – even though I previously would have thought that I do not move my neck much, but almost always look at what is right in front of me.

Perception occurs in the interplay between object and subject; the interests, expectations and goals of the perceiving subject thus play an essential role. For a variety of reasons, perception can never be neutral, although in his early, static phenomenology, Husserl has a tendency to presume that a neutral perception of the object would be more basic than all attracted or repelled, delighted or horrified consciousness of it.³² He presumes that each aesthetic liking is based on a neutral perception or presentification (*Vergegenwärtigung*) of a perception.³³ This idea has evoked Heidegger's critique. In ways which we cannot examine here, Heidegger shows that we originally encounter objects as ready-to-hand (*zuhanden*) rather than present-at-hand (*vorhanden*) and that our being-in-the-world is entirely permeated by moods.³⁴ Yet even within Husserl's own approach, this conception yields problems or even contradictions. If perception is never adequate and complete, there has to be something which motivates us to continue perceiving, exploring the object further and further; otherwise, the inevitable consequence would be frustration and resignation.³⁵ Yet since our perception is based on specific interests such that we want to gain always closer acquaintance with the object, we attend to this infinite task time and again. Be it that we pursue specific practical interests, be it that the acquisition of knowledge is in itself experienced as pleasurable, as Aristotle describes it in the last book of his *Nicomachean Ethics* – our perception is guided by seeking out what we are drawn to and fleeing what repels us.³⁶

Looking back at the various points mentioned earlier, there are obviously numerous aspects involved in perception, and it is never just a matter of one perceiving consciousness and one perceived thing. The thing is given in a nexus of referential implications with other objects, and I also always find myself in a context with others – a context that is essentially determined by language. Although Husserl initially puts an emphasis on the first of those two aspects, it is clear that world for him is always the *whole* context in both respects. In order for perception to be objective, it has to be intersubjective.

We will see here that an object is only an object insofar as it is *both* an object given to me and an object shared with others.³⁷

Husserl could have learned from Hegel's analyses of perception what he later on realizes through his own investigations: the thing-in-itself or that which remains identical in the object cannot be the object without its properties, but rather the idea of the fully determined object. It is tempting to abstract from the properties and posit the object in its core as pure unity, yet the object without properties is empty. Although such an object is unified and seems to escape multiplicity, we have not gained anything since the object has no identity and cannot be distinguished from other objects. The unity of the object, thus, cannot be achieved by abstracting from multiplicity but only by moving through it.

In his *Ideas*, Husserl was too occupied with the individual object to sufficiently consider its context. Hegel, in turn, focuses so much on the different objects that he does not examine the connections – in Husserl's words, references – between the objects. As a result, Hegel asks neither how it is that we become attentive to a specific object nor how it is possible to move from one object to other ones. For Hegel, the world on this level exists entirely of objects; the world is an accumulation of things, as it were. It will turn out that Hegel does not develop a satisfying concept of world as context in the following chapters either; in this respect, Husserl's phenomenology would have been instructive for him.

Perception encounters the tension between unity and multiplicity, that is, unified object and multiplicity of properties or modes of appearance. The interplay between unity and multiplicity cannot be understood by considering merely the individual object; only the context of objects will reveal what the object is and why it necessarily displays the double character of 'one' and 'also'. Hegel maintains that we need to move on in order to understand perception since only the understanding grasps connections; the understanding, in turn, points beyond itself to reason and so on. For Husserl, what characterizes the sciences is the turn to a different kind of idea: not the idea of the fully determined perceptual object (an unattainable idea), but, rather, the pure mathematical idea.

NOTES

1. Hegel, Enc., § 420.
2. Hegel, PhS, 95/69.
3. Hegel, PhS, 97/70.
4. Heidegger explains this very well: 'The wealth of sense-certainty does not belong to sense-certainty ... because in each case meaning intends only the single this

and not the what, the manifold, and the many in the one. ... Something can belong only to a knowing which is in itself a taking (*Nehmen*). ... With this taking, which fundamentally takes from out of a multiplicity, perceiving can mistake the what by taking the object as that which the object is not: Perception *can* deceive itself.' Martin Heidegger, 'Hegels Begriff der Erfahrung' (1942/43), in *Holzwege* (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1977), 125 ('Hegel's Concept of Experience', in *Off the Beaten Track* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002], 88).

5. Hegel, PhS, 99/72.

6. Ludwig Landgrebe discusses how Husserl overlooks the important area of preconceptual kinaesthetic self-movement (Ludwig Landgrebe, 'Phänomenologische Analyse und Dialektik' ('Phenomenological Analysis and Dialectics'), in *Phänomenologische Forschungen* (*Phenomenological Research*), vol. 10: Dialektik und Genesis in der Phänomenologie (Dialectics and Genesis in Phenomenology) [Freiburg: Alber, 1980], 72–75).

7. Hegel, PhS, 100/73.

8. Hegel, PhS, 102/74.

9. Hegel, PhS, 104/76.

10. Merold Westphal explains this point very well (Merold Westphal, 'Hegels Phänomenologie der Wahrnehmung' ('Hegel's Phenomenology of Perception'), in *Materialien zu Hegels 'Phänomenologie des Geistes'* (*Materials on Hegel's 'Phenomenology of Spirit'*), ed. H.F. Fulda et al. [Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1992], 93).

11. How fundamental this insight is becomes obvious, for example, in Husserl's famous remark that even God can see an object in a one-sided fashion only (Husserl, Hua III, §§ 43 & 44).

12. Unfortunately, Husserl's terminology in this context is very ambiguous. Overall, he uses the expression 'core' for three meanings; 'core' can thus designate all the three dimensions of the *noema* distinguished here. We are confronted with cores folded into each other, as it were. In Section 91 of *Ideas I*, the core of the *noema* is designated as that which remains identical throughout the different experiences. This is a preliminary meaning of core which Husserl will replace later on by the term 'central point' (*Zentralpunkt*) of the core. (Figuratively speaking, it would be quite sensible to designate the lowest, identical layer of the *noema* as the core, for what kind of strange core would contain an even smaller core? At the same time, a core still has some extension, while the 'central point', as a point, has no extension whatsoever and is thus nothing but a bearer.) The second meaning of core, which is the most common one in *Ideas I*, designates the bearer with its determinations and is thus more encompassing than the 'central point' (Husserl, Hua III, §§ 129–131). Third, Husserl even speaks of a 'full core' by which he means the 'sense in the mode of its fullness' (*Sinn im Modus seiner Fülle*), in other words, the object in the 'how' of determinations and modes of givenness, that is, the full *noema* (Husserl, Hua III, § 132). The expression 'full core' is truly unfortunate because it no longer considers the figurative meaning of a core (e.g. as the 'Kern' or pit of a fruit) and because it blurs the previous distinctions. Important is the fact that Husserl substantially distinguishes between three dimensions, as explained earlier.

13. Husserl, Hua XI, 20/58.

14. Ibid.

15. Husserl, Hua III, 321/313.

16. Husserl, Hua XI, 20/58.

17. Ibid.
18. Rudolf Bernet, 'Endlichkeit und Unendlichkeit in Husserls Phänomenologie der Wahrnehmung' ('Finitude and Infinity in Husserl's Phenomenology of Perception'), *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie (Journal of Philosophy)*, 40 (1978): 251–269.
19. Bernet, 'Endlichkeit und Unendlichkeit', 266.
20. Husserl, Hua III, 351/343.
21. Ibid.
22. Husserl gives a helpful summary: 'The object appearing constantly new, constantly different, is constituted as the same in these exceedingly intricate and wondrous systems of intention and fulfillment that make up the appearances' (Husserl, Hua XI, 13).
23. Husserl, Hua III, § 27 ff.
24. In the same section, Husserl states clearly that the world is not only 'a world of mere things' but, 'with the same immediacy', a world of values and goods, and a practical world (Husserl, Hua III, § 27). Husserl emphasizes that objects are given to me as 'objects of use' and as 'as beautiful and ugly, pleasant and unpleasant, agreeable and disagreeable, and the like'. This passage also shows what Husserl seems to neglect elsewhere, namely, that the world is co-originally a world of use, values and practices – yet Heidegger would respond that the world is not only world of use in a co-original sense but that this sense is even more original than that of a 'world of mere things'. Moreover, Husserl appears not entirely faithful to his own claim about co-originality; at times, he still investigates a mostly neutral, emotionally uninvolved perception of the world, that is, of a world which I observe more than being involved in it.
25. Husserl, Hua XI, 6/42.
26. Husserl, Hua XI, 15/52.
27. Anthony J. Steinbock, 'Affection and Attention: On the Phenomenology of Becoming Aware'. *Continental Philosophy Review. Special Edition: The Phenomenology of Attention*, 37, no. 1 (2004): 21–43.
28. Maurice Merleau-Ponty describes this complex picture well when he explores the 'rivalry of things' (Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Prose of the World*, trans. J. O'Neill [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973], 52).
29. Husserl, Hua XI, 146 ff./193 ff.
30. See especially Husserl, Hua IV, 'Section Two. Chapter Three: The Constitution of Psychic Reality through the Body'; Husserl, Hua XI, p. 13ff.; Hua XI, Supplementary Text XXV/25 ('Kinaestheses and Potential Expectations').
31. Klaus Held, 'Husserl's Phenomenology of the Life-World', in *The New Husserl*, ed. D. Welton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 21.
32. See Husserl, Hua III, § 28. Cf. Hua IV, 'Section One. Chapter One: The Idea of Nature in General', where Husserl explains that emotional and valuing acts point to a founding level of mere objects of the senses.
33. Husserl, Hua III, § 116.
34. Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (1927), 17th ed. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1993). (*Being and Time*, trans. J. Stambaugh, revised edition (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), esp. § 15 ('The Being of Beings Encountered in the Surrounding World') and § 29 ['Da-sein as Attunement']).

35. Bernet, 'Endlichkeit und Unendlichkeit', 268. Bernet shows that our ultimate motivation lies in our (self-)responsibility, as it becomes obvious in Husserl's *Crisis*. However, when Bernet explains this responsibility by way of 'optimal knowledge' or 'optimal truth' in the sense of the 'best possible, i.e., argumentatively best proven response to a given question', then this suggestion remains problematic as long as we do not know how such a truth can be understood in the phenomenological (rather than positivist, etc.) sense. See Rudolf Bernet, 'Zur Teleologie der Erkenntnis: Eine Antwort an Rudolf Boehm' ('On the Teleology of Knowledge: Response to Rudolf Boehm'), *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* (Journal of Philosophy), 40 (1978): 666.

36. There are further reasons and arguments as to why perception is always already permeated by moods. Natalie Depraz and Francisco Varela examine how the phenomenon of protention shows that consciousness is not originally neutral. Protention, pro-tension, is affectively enriched as a pre-sentiment – be it fear, hope, anxiety and so on – of that which approaches us. This becomes obvious when protention is investigated according to its own nature rather than on the basis of retention and the present, as Husserl often tends to do (Natalie Depraz and Francisco Varela, 'Au coeur du temps: l'auto-antécédance' ('At the Heart of Time: the Auto-Antecedent'), *Intellectica*, 36–37 (2003): 183–203).

37. This does not mean, however, that Husserl would need to prove the existence of others in order to allow for objectivity. The world is always already constituted in an intersubjective fashion, and Husserl is merely interested in elucidating, not in establishing, this intersubjectivity. The question to which the *V. Cartesian Meditation* gives an answer is not a question about the existence of others but about how others are given to me (see Chapter 7).

Chapter 3

Moving Up: Origins of Ideality

And they [the scientists] form these methods not with the naiveté of an everyday man, but with the naiveté of a higher level.

Husserl, *Hua* XVII, 353

The move towards the natural scientific standpoint that we are examining in this chapter is a move that, for Hegel, indeed follows dialectically from the perceptual standpoint as we are looking for the kinds of explanations normal perception failed to provide. Yet Hegel's chapter on force and the understanding is quite a challenge to our understanding, partly because the state of the natural sciences has changed between Hegel's and our world. Yet an even more important reason for the difficulty stems from the way in which, as Husserl shows, the natural scientific viewpoint has become dominant in the twentieth century. Something that is taken for granted proves more difficult to discern, especially in its origins.

Hegel's and Husserl's accounts will serve to shed light on each other. For Hegel, as for Husserl, the attitude of the natural sciences represents a version of natural consciousness. Obviously, the natural sciences have advanced further than common sense – even though it remains to be investigated what kind of advancement this is. Yet the essential feature of natural consciousness, namely, to strictly separate its object from itself, also designates natural scientific consciousness. The sciences even increase this feature, as especially Husserl points out, by attempting to eliminate the researching subject from the investigation as much as possible, in order to guarantee the 'objectivity' of scientific research.

Hegel describes the accomplishments of the natural sciences as the formation of three worlds. Opposed to the sensuous world is a first supersensible world of natural laws. However, this restful world of laws turns out to

be flawed and cannot really be relied on for giving a satisfying explanation regarding the moved world of appearances. The opposition cannot be retained; thus, a second supersensible world is discovered which encompasses the previous two.

Husserl's investigation of the natural scientific attitude can also be described in terms of a relation between three worlds. By way of the mathematization of nature, the sciences construct an ideal world whose nature becomes most obvious when compared to the non-scientific world of mere intuition. It is this world of mere intuition which Husserl designates, more precisely, as lifeworld. Since the scientific results 'flow back' (*einströmen*) into the lifeworld, the concept has to be expanded to the lifeworld in an encompassing sense which includes sciences, nature and culture. Ultimately, the natural sciences cannot maintain their one-sided objectivism. As the sciences have taken the forgetfulness of the subject to an extreme, it is particularly difficult for philosophy to find an open ear in them. Yet this utmost intensification of the natural attitude comes to reveal its inner contradictions (according to Hegel) or its inherent crisis which radiates far beyond the sciences (according to Husserl).

THE EMERGENCE OF THE IDEAL WORLD IN HEGEL

The remaining question at the end of the section on perception is that which determines the next chapter of *Phenomenology of Spirit*: How can unity and manifold be thought together? How can we come to grasp the fact that things always appear in context; how can being-for-itself and being-for-others be reconciled? The chapter on force and the understanding is the third and last of the chapters on consciousness in *Phenomenology*. The development of consciousness and its object can be sketched as follows. The object of consciousness has developed from the 'this' to the universal and finally to the unconditional or absolute universal. The modes in which consciousness knows its object are related to one another as *aisthesis* (here as the mere receiving of what is given to the senses), *doxa* (here as everyday consciousness which can perceive and be deceived) and *episteme* (knowledge involving the understanding).¹

The attitude of the understanding will be interpreted here in terms of the natural scientific attitude; I will first briefly justify this interpretative decision. Subsequently, the chapter on understanding will be analysed following the successive emergence of the three 'worlds'. The tension of unity and multiplicity, that is the result of the analysis concerning perception, will be conceived as a *movement* between unity and multiplicity, and Hegel's name for this movement is force. Force, in its character as motion, belongs to the

sensuous world. Yet the law on which the force is based is more stable than the force; it leads to the first supersensible world which forms the truth of the sensuous world: the ‘inert realm of laws’ (*ruhiges Reich von Gesetzen*).

The laws are supposed to explain the procedures in the sensuous or perceptual world – yet in order for the explanation to be successful, law and force have to coincide. The two different worlds hence collapse into the second supersensible world which encompasses both of them. Hegel’s exposition of the inverted world is at times rather enigmatic and has to be interpreted in some detail. At the end of the two worlds’ collapsing into one, consciousness enters the scene. The laws are the products of the understandings, so to speak, and yet they fit the real world exactly – this is how consciousness encounters itself; the researcher can no longer ignore himself or herself.

Since the move to self-consciousness has – rightfully – been described as perhaps the most important moment in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*,² the dialectic and the final shortcomings of the understanding play an important role for the whole of the work. At the same time, current interpretations of this chapter are particularly diverse; some problems with the two most common interpretations (the ‘Kantian’ reading and the ‘practical’ reading) shall be discussed here. In contrast, reading Hegel’s text parallel with Husserl’s considerations on the lifeworld allows us to focus on the concepts of subject, object and world. The standpoint of the understanding would then collapse because it carries the philosophy of the object to the extreme, and yet it has to realize that it was the subject that set up the different worlds which collapse in the end. The subject thus experiences a self-encounter, and this is the emergence of self-consciousness.

In the current chapter, the level of the understanding will be interpreted as the standpoint of modern natural sciences.³ As Hegel describes it, the sciences turn to objects within their context; the world is conceived as a play of forces, which we can describe with the help of laws. Scientists are entirely focused on the world; they understand the world but not themselves.⁴ There is no reason to strive for such self-understanding; the sciences are all the more successful the more objective they are and the more they turn away from the self. We will return to this point in the context of Husserl’s criticism regarding the natural sciences: Husserl criticizes the sciences for their objectivism, which leads them to forget that science is always an achievement of subjectivity and that the sciences rely on the everyday, subject-relative lifeworld.

In Hegel’s chapter on understanding, the sciences also ultimately suffer from their attempt to keep apart two sides which cannot be separated, namely, the eternally valid, motionless laws and the understanding. The conceptual framework which the understanding had so skilfully thought out and set up in order to oppose the two sides to each other in a stable fashion collapses at the end, and the two sides fall into one. This is how consciousness comes to

encounter itself. The sciences are thus unable to maintain their own position, their own division.

However, considering the structure of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, a fundamental difficulty emerges if the level of the understanding is to be interpreted as the standpoint of the natural sciences. After consciousness has become self-consciousness, we reach the level of ‘observing reason’, that is reason observing nature. Is not this level much more in correspondence with the standpoint of natural sciences? This objection is certainly in some sense justified, yet there are good reasons to focus on the understanding (and to limit the investigation of the scientific standpoint predominantly to this chapter). Objective reason mainly turns to organic nature and is thus mostly equivalent to biology and a part of chemistry. However, the modern natural sciences⁵ derive their special character from the privilege attributed to physics, and the position of physics finds its representative rather in the chapter on understanding. Moreover, physics has invaded other natural sciences, as it were, such that animate nature is investigated following the model of non-animate nature. Regarding both domains, there is now a search for universally valid laws which can be mathematized, that is can be described by way of mathematical equations and models. Similarly, modern technology, as the product of the natural sciences which determines our present world, is certainly founded on those tendencies that emerge in the chapter on understanding. And it is indeed crucial to consider the current situation if Hegel’s and Husserl’s thoughts regarding the natural sciences are to be compared to each other.

Hegel’s statement regarding observing reason, namely, that we see it ‘revert to the standpoint of “meaning” and “perceiving”; but not in the sense that it is certain of what is merely an “other”, yet with the certainty of itself being this “other”’,⁶ leads us to wonder whether the modern natural sciences have not rather neglected this insight and instead turned to human beings as an alien object, without the certainty that it is itself this ‘other’. At the same time, this citation confirms that the *Phenomenology* does not present a straightforward progression from one level to the next. It would therefore be wrong to claim that observing reason was in every respect a higher level than the understanding, such that the natural sciences would be treated unfairly if they were not considered in its most advanced state. The movement of the *Phenomenology* is a circular one; on a higher level, namely, that of reason, we are returned to meaning and perception. When we first reach reason, a renewed lesson on understanding is necessary, as it were.

These remarks were meant as a prelude to the more detailed interpretation of the chapter on force and the understanding. Hegel’s third chapter is not as clearly structured as the two preceding ones; his structure of three ‘worlds’ as three levels will be our guide. These worlds are the sensuous world, the first supersensible world, and the second supersensible world.

SENSUOUS WORLD AND SUPERSENSIBLE WORLD

Similar to perception, the understanding also first considers its object to carry all significance and meaning. The positive determination of the unconditioned universal, which has emerged as the result of perception, consists, according to Hegel, in it forming a 'unity of "being-for-self" and "being-for-another"'.⁷ How can we think the object simultaneously as the medium of many matters, as many material determinations which distinguish it from other objects and also as a unified object for itself? – only by conceiving of the object as a movement, namely, a movement oscillating between unity and multiplicity. The movement consists, on the one hand, in the expression or expansion of the many matters – an expression through which they realize themselves – and in the retraction or withdrawal from the object, on the other. This movement is what the understanding calls *force*. Hegel states elsewhere: 'Force [expresses] the idea of relation itself.'⁸ Force designates the object's dynamic relation to other objects and to itself. Undoubtedly, Hegel is engaging in a dialogue with Kant in this chapter.⁹ Hegel tries to rethink the categories, the highest concepts of the understanding which determine what and how beings are, on the basis of a unified ground. More specifically, force seems to present an attempt at appropriating the three categories of relation (inherence and subsistence, causality and dependence and community)¹⁰ in a new form. Force is here not identical to the important category of causality, but rather 'raises itself' (*erhebt sich*) above it, that is, encompasses it, yet on a higher level, and encompasses more than causality.¹¹ To what extent Hegel can fulfil these intentions would require a study of Kant and Hegel. Yet it is obvious that Hegel, in the concept of force, has captured the essence of beings in a unified fashion, provided that he develops the concept convincingly.

Force necessarily has to express itself and yet remains within itself. Force thus has two sides; it is comprised of unfolded moments which exist for themselves and is also a unitary force that remains in itself. The expression of the force is, at first glance, evoked by something else, yet since expression is a necessary feature of the force, this supposedly alien element has to be part of its own essence. Force thus has its other within itself; it is triggered to express itself – it is, as Hegel has it, 'solicited' – by something which is of the same nature as itself: another force. Force can only take place as the play of two forces: one of them being 'solicited', the other 'soliciting'; one expresses itself, the other is driven back into itself. Yet we must not conceive of these two forces as two independent substances. Their being consists only in this play, their being has 'really the significance of a pure *vanishing*' and what the forces are, 'they are, only in this middle term and in this contact', namely, in the middle of their interplay.¹²

The force constitutes – to return to the initial problem, the question concerning the essence of the thing – the ‘inner being’¹³ or the ‘true background’¹⁴ of things. It is that which transpires when we go beyond the superficial facade. On the surface, the thing presents itself as an irreconcilable contradiction of multiplicity and unity, yet this double nature is only contradictory to a static point of view. From a dynamic or genetic perspective, the thing exhibits its internal movement. Force is an assumption, so to speak, a ‘mental entity’ (*Gedankending*)¹⁵ which the understanding refers to in order to grasp the thing in motion. The understanding becomes conscious of this character as it observes force. Force exists only as expression and withdrawal; the truth of force is its thought or concept.

The force’s mode of existence can be more easily determined when grasping it as ‘appearance’, for it is intrinsic to appearance to emerge and disappear. Hegel explains in the Preface to the *Phenomenology*: ‘Appearance is the arising and passing away that does not itself arise and pass away, but is “in itself” [i.e. subsists intrinsically], and constitutes the actuality and the movement of the life of truth.’¹⁶ It then becomes more obvious what Hegel means when he, in the chapter on understanding, introduces appearance as a ‘totality of show’ (*Ganzes des Scheins*) where ‘show’ is that kind of ‘being’ that ‘is directly and in its own self a *non-being*’.¹⁷ Force as the play of forces is no existing substance but exists only in its movement as expression or coming into appearance and disappearance or withdrawal. This is exactly what it means to appear.

In this play of forces as appearance, something else comes to the fore which can at first only be described negatively. The force, as we have seen, is no pure being, no being-in-itself. The appearance points beyond itself to a being-in-itself which represents the truth and permanence of the appearance, yet which is empty in the beginning. Above the sensuous world of appearance, there emerges a ‘*supersensible* world which henceforth is the *true* world’, also designated as the ‘permanent *beyond*’ (*das bleibende Jenseits*) or the ‘in itself’.¹⁸ This newly arisen world, the first supersensible world, is initially empty and indeterminate since it has emerged from the shortcomings of the appearing world. The supersensible world is what the appearing world is *not* – yet according to the principle of determinate negation, it is determined through that which is negated in it.¹⁹ The supersensible world has transpired from the appearance and is its truth; the supersensible is the ‘*appearance qua appearance*’.²⁰ If we study the appearance as such, it turns out that its dynamic character is no frenzied chaos, but a movement in which a law is at work or, rather, a movement that can be described through laws. The understanding – which is essentially a unifying form of thinking – can in this way simplify the manifoldness of that which appears. The force was essentially determined by differences: first the differences between the many

specific forces and, then, seen more fully, the difference which was effective in the many specific forces, that is the difference between soliciting and being solicited. The law expresses the unitary movement in this general difference and is thus the truth of the appearance.

The first supersensible world is accordingly an 'inert realm of laws'²¹, that is its definition, as it were. It is the 'tranquil image'²² of the appearing world. The result is a three-part structure: located 'above' the appearing world is the supersensible world, and 'under' it, as it were, or on the other side of the appearing world is the understanding. Hegel portrays the supersensible world and the understanding as extremes between which lies the appearance. This structure is a 'typical' structure of consciousness, involving consciousness itself and its objects as set over against it, yet now the appearance comes into play as a mediating middle. Two brief remarks concerning this structure are in order. First, it becomes obvious once again that Hegel is engaged here in a discussion with Kant. Radicalizing Kant's position, Hegel stresses the distinction between the thing-in-itself and the thing-as-appearance by locating them in two different worlds. In opposition to Kant, Hegel claims that we have access to the thing-in-itself because it stems from appearance such that the latter serves as a mediator between us and the in-itself. Furthermore, we are already given some indication that the structure cannot be maintained in this fashion as a separate one but will eventually collapse.

The second remark concerns Hegel's concept of the world. Since it has already become obvious in perception that the thing always occurs in a context with other things, the point of focus for the understanding is now explicitly the context, relation or world. However, Hegel does not truly examine the nature of the world. The approach of consciousness does not change when it turns to the world rather than to a thing. This emerges as a lack especially in comparison with Husserl's phenomenology, but, even if considered by itself, it is apparent that the world is not a large object or a sum of objects; it is the non-objective context of relations between these objects.²³

As the law is meant to represent the appearing world, multiplicity seems to enter into it, and the result is that there are many laws, corresponding to the many appearances. Yet the understanding manages to unify the many laws. For example, a feather falls according to the same law as the stone, and even the planets move according to the same law of gravity. However, the most important activity of the understanding is *explanation*. Explanation is a peculiar phenomenon because it opens up a difference which it immediately annihilates. A law is formulated about a force – for example, gravity – which is certainly distinct from the law. Yet, in order for the explanation to work, in order for it to be an optimal explanation, the force has to be exactly the way the law characterizes it. The goal of explaining is that law and force come to coincide. In this sense, Hegel can designate the explanation as tautological.

The difference is thus a difference which ultimately only pertains to the understanding; it is created and extinguished by the understanding.

Yet the decisive point concerns the effect which explanation has on the two separated worlds, the appearing world and the supersensible world of laws. Originally, all movement and all change could be found only in the appearing world, whereas the world of laws was inert and enduring. As a successful explanation lets force and law coincide, this division can no longer be maintained. Because the force is explained precisely through the law, rest (*Ruhe*) and self-sameness also affect the force, yet, since the law shall describe the force exactly, movement and inequality come to affect it.

THE INVERTED WORLD

Hence the second supersensible world or ‘inverted world’ emerges. This strange world is described as ‘inverted’ because the determination of the force also comes to pertain to the law and vice versa. Hegel provides concrete accounts of the inverted world which admittedly seem rather peculiar. What is the north pole in the first supersensible world is in the second, in its ‘supersensible in-itself [viz. in the earth]’, the south pole, and vice versa.²⁴ This may still be plausible since we do indeed refer to that part of the magnet which is attracted by the earth’s north pole as north pole although it is, strictly speaking, the magnet’s south pole, given that opposite poles attract. But, first of all, is this not just a matter of convention? Furthermore, this example is strangely superficial and uninformative as well as extremely specific – does this not hold only for magnets? Hegel adds further examples, and the strangeness increases. The oxygen pole in the first supersensible world is said to be hydrogen pole in the second supersensible world, and vice versa. What is sweet in the first is said to be sour in the inverted in-itself, and what is black in the first shall be, in itself, white. In light of these examples, it is hardly surprising that interpreters turn to the only example not taken from the realm of nature and natural sciences, namely, the example of punishment which is, in itself, a blessing for the criminal.²⁵

When we attend more closely to the way in which Hegel introduces these examples, it becomes obvious that something so contradictory cannot be his final word in characterizing the inverted world. At first, the inverted world presents itself in this way, namely, right after it has emerged from the tautological activity of explanation. Hegel states explicitly that the second supersensible world, ‘looked at superficially’, presents itself like this, as described in the examples. Furthermore, Hegel uses the grammatical form of the subjunctive in his descriptions of these examples.²⁶ On closer scrutiny, it turns out that opposites like appearance and the supersensible or the in-itself ‘as of two different kinds of actuality’ no longer exist in this inverted world.²⁷

It would be a misunderstanding to distribute the opposites between 'two substances such as would support them and lend them a separate subsistence: this would result in the understanding withdrawing from the inner world and relapsing into its previous position'.²⁸ The idea of the inverted world in which the sweet would be in itself sour, and so on, emerges when approaching the new supersensible world with the same attitude as the old one, based on the assumption of separate substances and unmoved relations.

It is thus not appropriate to reject these natural scientific examples outright, as if they were an aberration of Hegel's.²⁹ Rather, Hegel puts forth a preliminary understanding of the second supersensible world which emerges from an attempt to understand this world in a static fashion, disregarding that which is most essential to it, namely, its character of movement or process.³⁰ The first supersensible world was lacking precisely the principle of movement. Therefore, it could not be an image of the appearing world. As the laws are supposed to truly capture the appearances, movement occurs in the world of laws. In order to depict the second supersensible world in its essence, it is necessary to 'eliminate the sensuous idea' and to think 'pure change'.³¹ At the end of exploring the world, understanding gains the insight that every being harbours its opposite in-itself. This is the meaning of Hegel's peculiar examples; the sweet thing is not in itself sour, but sweet and sour only exist in relation to each other. The sweet has the sour in itself as that from which it gains its determination by way of contrast. Appearance is not one pole or the other but moves between these two poles.

The second supersensible world thus turns out to be the whole. It has 'overarched' the first supersensible world, and the first supersensible world in turn encapsulates the appearing world.³² The unity of these worlds is not devoid of differences, yet these differences are inner differences or differences in themselves; this means that their nature is infinity. Experienced in this way, the whole is infinity because it holds all differences within itself; it is the infinite not as contrasted with the finite but including even the finite.³³ Hegel describes this movement of the world as 'pulsating' or as 'the absolute restlessness (*Unruhe*) of pure self-movement',³⁴ namely, as movement which does not step outside of itself and yet retains its continuous motion – like the blood which streams through our body in a continuous, pulsating motion.

In the end, understanding has to admit that the world and consciousness, as the two separated extremes, fall into one. The laws are concepts or ideas of the understanding, and the laws are the way they are because the world is exactly as the law describes it. Consciousness thus encounters itself and becomes self-consciousness. It is the nature of explanation, as we have already seen, to make differences which it then sublates; hence Hegel states: 'The reason why 'explaining' affords so much self-satisfaction is just because in it consciousness is, so to speak, ... enjoying only itself.'³⁵ If the natural

scientists are being honest, they have to concede that their activity is not free of subjectivity; ‘consciousness of an “other”, of an object in general, is itself necessarily self-consciousness’.³⁶

In the literature, the important transition to self-consciousness has been explained without paying sufficient attention to the chapter on the understanding and the role of the sciences within it. Two readings predominate, which shall be referred to here as the ‘Kantian’ reading and the ‘practical’ reading.³⁷ According to the ‘Kantian’ reading, self-consciousness emerges because consciousness realizes that it brings forth its object or that its object is the activity of understanding itself. This reading strikes me as problematic because the standpoint of the natural sciences is not really taken into account. We have seen in the current chapter that the sciences play an important role in Hegel’s discussion of the understanding, and several moves within Hegel’s text can best be explained by reference to the sciences. Furthermore, the differences between Kant and Hegel are quite clearly present in the chapter on the understanding, as briefly explained earlier.

The ‘practical’ reading proposes instead that the move to self-consciousness constitutes a move from theory to practice, or from theorizing about the world to acting within it. The theoretical attitude of consciousness places all the weight on the object, whereas self-consciousness conceives of itself as a subject involved in various practices. The difficulties with this reading, briefly put, are that the text of Hegel’s third chapter does not provide much evidence for the emphasis on practice, and it would be difficult to convince the sciences that they are neglecting the practical aspects of life.

The reading proposed here could be called a ‘phenomenological’ reading, and it is inspired by Husserl’s philosophy more than might appear permissible. To be sure, Husserl’s phenomenology cannot be a prerequisite for understanding the dialectic of the understanding in Hegel’s *Phenomenology*. But reading the chapter in terms of the relation between the different worlds (which Hegel himself stresses) as well as focusing on the role and responsibility of the subject and especially the scientist has proven helpful for understanding the different movements within Hegel’s text and for seeing how the strict separation between the world and consciousness can no longer be sustained such that the subject can no longer deny his or her responsibility. We will see how, in turn, a reading of Husserl’s *Crisis* can benefit from an understanding of the relation between the different worlds in Hegel.

HUSSERL AND THE LIFEWORLD

Husserl encounters the natural sciences as he diagnoses a crisis; this crisis concerns not only the sciences but our life as a whole, because the sciences have come to determine our life.³⁸ It is Husserl’s main thesis that the crisis

of the sciences is caused by a forgetfulness: a forgetfulness of the lifeworld. We will have to examine what is meant by this claim. In a nutshell, Husserl maintains that the sciences have lost their basis as they forget what grounds them, namely, the natural world of our life on which all activity rests. Just as the scientist at the end of Hegel's chapter on understanding has to realize that his attempts to abstract from all subjectivity are doomed to fail, so too Husserl alerts the sciences to the fact that their objectivism cannot be sustained. This objectivism has the effect that the sciences cannot provide responses to those questions which concern us most in our life.³⁹

Another important point of commonality between Hegel and Husserl lies in the differentiation of worlds. In Husserl's analysis of the natural scientific attitude, he distinguishes between the lifeworld and the natural scientific world of ideal objects or, to use Hegel's terms, the 'sensuous' world and the 'supersensible' world. The sciences regard the supersensible world as the true world and replace the sensuous world through it or, rather, measure the sensuous world against the supersensible. For different reasons, this practice cannot be sustained, and it finally turns out that the lifeworld encompasses everything – including the ideal world of the natural sciences which is based on the lifeworld as its ground and from which results flow back into the lifeworld. Ultimately, there cannot even be two separate worlds since the notion of world signifies the whole. If the sciences want to establish their own world, then this world must not lack anything. Yet we have learned from Hegel that the supersensible world is lacking movement, and Husserl teaches us that the sciences cannot provide answers to our essential questions since they exclude our subjectivity and forget about their own fundament.

In this chapter, we will focus mainly on two questions. First, what is the lifeworld? Second, what is the scientific world of ideal objects, how is it constituted and what does it consist of? As Husserl presents different concepts of the lifeworld, narrow and wide ones, an answer to the first question shall be pursued in several steps. Briefly put, the lifeworld in the narrow sense is that which is distinct from the natural scientific world of ideal objects; the lifeworld in the wide sense, however, encompasses this ideal world and will be discussed only at the end of this chapter.

Husserl designates the lifeworld in the narrow sense of being pre- or non-scientific as the 'subjective-relative' world. This relativity is countered by the sciences and their quest for objectivity; they strive to achieve independence from the subject by idealizing or mathematizing nature. This idealization wants to determine its objects completely and eliminate all lifeworldly indeterminacy. As the world of scientifically ideal objects is formed, the pre-scientific lifeworld is subordinated to it. On the one hand, the lifeworld (here still understood in its narrow sense as non-scientific world) constitutes the basis for all scientific insights; on the other hand, scientific results flow back into the lifeworld.

As a result of this mutual interpenetration, the lifeworld in the wider sense arises, encompassing both worlds previously considered. This lifeworld in the encompassing and proper sense is a suitable object of philosophical study in the context of an 'ontology of the life world', that is, a search for invariant or irrelative structures of the lifeworld. Such a phenomenological analysis of the lifeworld, in contrast to the natural sciences, forgets neither about the universal context nor about the subject.

A discussion of the different concepts of the lifeworld and the relation between these concepts cannot be pursued in detail here.⁴⁰ At best, this chapter can contribute to the discussion by showing that an examination of the mathematization of nature and the development of a world of ideal objects makes it necessary to start from a specific narrow sense of the lifeworld and to arrive at a more encompassing concept. Husserl introduces the lifeworld to delimit it from the world of the natural sciences. He wants to elucidate the crisis of the sciences by showing what is neglected by them. In order to examine what the sciences are and how they change our life, Husserl asks about the pre- and non-scientific world (since the sciences have not always existed). Ultimately, the important question concerns as to how the sciences came into existence, how they were instituted and what sense or meaning they were meant to have. Yet since we have long been taking the sciences for granted,⁴¹ it is only by abstraction that we can access a world without sciences.⁴² We know, however, that sciences and especially modern sciences have been historically instituted and that a world without sciences existed; the quest for such a world is thus justified.

The lifeworld in the narrow sense, as it is first introduced in the *Crisis*, results from such questioning and contrasting as the *pre- and non-scientific world of sense intuition*.⁴³ This sense of lifeworld draws on Husserl's reflections in his lectures on *Phenomenological Psychology* in which he returns to the pre-conceptual or pre-predicative world of mere experience in which every 'predicative, theorizing activity remains out of play'.⁴⁴ It is this world of straightforward intuition which Husserl designates in the 1920s as the lifeworld.⁴⁵ This world of intuition is pre-theoretical, pre-cultural and ahistorical; therefore, Husserl is confronted with the question of whether this world actually exists. Indeed, he already states in his lectures on *Phenomenological Psychology*: 'That which is given to us in simple intuition as something seen, heard, or somehow experienced, exhibits upon closer consideration traces of earlier spiritual accomplishments (*Geistestätigkeiten*). It is thus unclear where in pure experience we can ever find a truly pre-theoretical world, devoid of the sense sedimentations (*Sinnesniederschlägen*) of previous thought.'⁴⁶ The world of pure intuition is a theoretical construct, a product of abstraction which is nevertheless helpful as it elucidates the emergence of the sciences.

THE MATHEMATIZATION OF NATURE

The lifeworld in the narrow sense is fundamentally determined by the fact that it is 'merely subjective-relative',⁴⁷ that is, given to a specific subject which has these intuitions. Against this subject-relativity, the modern natural sciences present their ideal of subject-independence, objectivity and universality. Husserl follows the process in which the sciences form a world of exact ideal objects such that the lifeworld is being replaced by the world of ideal objects or measured against the latter as the true world. The fact that the lifeworld grounds the sciences and that the sciences are groundless without the lifeworld is ignored by the sciences. The process of forming this ideal world thus has to be such that it becomes possible to neglect the grounding function of the lifeworld. How is the ideal world formed? The essential keywords which Husserl uses to describe this process are 'mathematization' and 'idealization'.

Section IX of the *Crisis* is entitled 'Galileo's Mathematization of Nature'; it opens with the important question: '*What is the meaning (Sinn) of this mathematization of nature?*' How do we reconstruct the train of thought which motivated it?'⁴⁸ By posing this question, he already implies that the roots of the mathematization of nature can be found in lifeworldly experience. As it will turn out, there are tendencies in our everyday life which resemble this idealization and can serve to prepare it. Nevertheless, the scientific idealization is not a continuous prolongation of these lifeworldly tendencies; it has a different character. In order to see more clearly how idealization originates in lifeworldly experience and is nevertheless fundamentally different from it, we shall summarize once again the main features of perception as examined in the previous chapter.

In perception, an object is always given in a one-sided fashion, yet we constitute an in-itself of the object that guides our perceptual process as an idea. This unattainable idea of the completely given object is formed in the perceptual process and is transformed again and again as this process continues. Now, the natural sciences also deal with ideas or, as Husserl calls it, with idealities (*Idealitäten*). Hence the question arises as to how the perceptual idea of the object-in-itself and the scientific idea are related. The most significant difference consists in the fact that the perceptual idea always harbours indeterminacy, whereas the sciences want to exclude this indeterminacy and reach complete exactitude. The natural sciences intend to grasp, thematize and determine the in-itself of the object which guides the perceptual process in a flexible and unthematized fashion. Yet since the perceived object necessarily includes indeterminacy, this intention of the sciences already shows that their object cannot be a perceivable one.

How is idealization possible, that is, how can an idea of the object be conceived in which its essential indeterminacy is eliminated? This is the

question Husserl takes up in the section on Galileo and in the corresponding appendices.⁴⁹ It will turn out that idealization is necessarily restricted to a particular aspect of the object, namely, its spatial extension. Spatial extension lends itself to mathematization, that is, to quantitative description, whereas other qualities of the object can be mathematized only in an indirect fashion.

As the sciences idealize their object, they can continue the tendency inherent in pre-scientific consciousness of bringing the object to an ever more exact givenness. This tendency, which could be called a 'tendency toward perfection', is shaped and controlled by practical purposes. Even though we never attain the complete givenness of the object, there exists a point of termination in the practical realm, 'in the sense that it fully satisfies special practical interests'.⁵⁰ Perfection in the practical sense is accomplished when our practical goals and purposes have been satisfied such that there is no incentive to pursue the exploration of the object any further. If the table in front of me is not wobbly, my practical wishes have already been fulfilled. If, however, it is wobbly, then I will want to find out which leg might be shorter in order to eliminate or improve the shaking with the help of some paper. The practical interests of the carpenter extend further since he assesses whether the table's surface is even and whether its legs are fixed at a right angle, and so on. But there is no need for the carpenter to theorize about exact right angles, and the goniometer which he uses does not show any exact right angles: exact right angles are not to be found in the lifeworld at all. As Husserl puts it, the objects of intuition 'fluctuate ... in the sphere of the merely typical'.⁵¹ The indeterminacy of the object will be diminished but never eliminated. As technology progresses, 'the ideal of perfection is pushed further and further';⁵² this formulation emphasizes once again that the idea of the fully determined object is fashioned and modified in the process of closer determination.

By way of practical perfection, however, we never attain scientific idealities free from any indeterminacy. Such idealities are 'limit-shapes', that is, 'invariant and never attainable poles' of the particular 'series of perfectings (*Vervollkommnungsreihe*)'.⁵³ In the context of describing the mathematization of nature, Husserl reverts to formulations from the domain of mathematics, a domain very familiar to him. A limit (*limes*) can, for example, be the limit of a series of numbers shaped in accordance with a specific law. If we start from the number '1' and apply the law of dividing it into equal halves, we yield a series of ever smaller numbers ($1/2$, $1/4$, $1/8$, $1/16$, $1/32$, etc.). These numbers approach '0' without ever reaching it; '0' is thus the limit of this series. If we transfer this case to objects of perception, we learn that the object's limit shape belongs to a different level than the intuitive object and can be reached only through a transgression, as it were. Furthermore, the example of the number series indicates how the transgression is supposed to

be thought, namely, as following a series of shapes which develop in a particular direction and finally as an accomplishment of thought which continues the series to infinity, thus leading to a limit shape as its conclusion. In an appendix to the section on Galileo, Husserl designates idealization as a 'general attitude of thought, in which, departing from an exemplary individual object as exemplar for "any object whatsoever", this object is imagined to have passed through an open endless manifold of its ever incomplete, but to be completed subjective presentations'.⁵⁴ The 'open endless', the infinite manifold of 'presentations', is a specifically modern idea since only the modern mind tackles infinite tasks and attempts to describe the infinite universe of beings with the help of mathematics which does not fear the transgression to infinity. Premodern mathematics 'knows only finite tasks', as Husserl points out.⁵⁵

There are specific qualities of the object which lend themselves particularly well to such idealization: the 'spatio-temporal' qualities of the object, that is, the spatial extension of the object and its situatedness in time, as well as the correlation of space and time in change. According to the sciences, the paradigm of change lies in the change of place. To be sure, this is an abstraction since the objects exhibit many other qualities such as colour, consistency and flavour.⁵⁶ The sciences strive to mathematize such qualities as well since they want to be universal sciences. Furthermore, the qualities of the object are connected by way of its inner horizon such that they point to each other; it would become apparent as a lack or limitation if the sciences were to focus on just one quality and ignored all the others.

Husserl designates the non-spatio-temporal qualities of the object as 'specific sense-qualities' or as 'plena' (*Füllen*).⁵⁷ These plena, so Husserl explains, cannot be mathematized directly, but only indirectly. It is even possible to determine the reason why a direct mathematization is impossible and 'impossible in principle': There is just *one* mathematics of space, just *one* geometry. Husserl explains: 'We have not two but only *one* universal form of the world: not two but only *one* geometry, i.e., one of these shapes, without a second for plena.'⁵⁸ A quantitative description of the world is possible only in a single fashion. Geometry is a science which has developed on the basis of the empirical craft of measuring. For Galileo, geometry existed already as fully established; Galileo's special contribution to the development of modern science is the hypothesis that an encompassing, universal mathematization of the world is possible. Husserl recommends that we reflect on the 'strangeness' inherent in the idea of universal mathematization, especially since we nowadays take this idea for granted.

How is the indirect mathematization of the plena brought about? Husserl approaches this process by pointing out that the plena are 'closely related in a quite peculiar and *regulated* way (*geregelt verschwistert*)' with the

spatio-temporal shapes.⁵⁹ He does not quite explain how this ‘regulated relatedness’ works; he discusses an example, on the one hand, and points to the causal interconnectedness of the world, on the other. The example concerns the dependence of the pitch of the tone on the length of the string set made to vibrate as was noted by the Pythagoreans,⁶⁰ that is, the connection between the sensible quality ‘sound’ and the geometric quality ‘length of string’. Several further examples come to mind, and Husserl chooses one of the historically earliest, it seems. The important point is that plena exist in gradations; there are various degrees of warmth, various pitches of sounds, and so on. These gradations motivate the idea of a description in numbers; this possibility has to be explored with respect to each quality. Once it has turned out, for example, that liquids expand in a regulated fashion when the temperature increases, the invention of a thermometer is only a small step away.

Yet it is a big step from such individual examples to the idea of the universal mathematization of the world. According to Husserl, this idea is founded on the conviction that every change occurs in line with laws of causality and that every change of the plena is connected to some change of shape. However, ‘we do not have an a priori insight that every change of the specific qualities of intuited bodies ... refers causally (*geregelt verschwistert*) to occurrences in the abstract shape-stratum of the world’.⁶¹ Here lies the audacity of Galileo’s thesis or of the thesis of modern natural science – even though we take this idea for granted. ‘Thanks to our earlier scientific schooling’,⁶² we imagine sound as a wave between a source and our ear. Yet the fact that it is difficult to understand the ‘referring’ between spatio-temporal shapes and plena and thus the possibility of an indirect mathematization of plena might be symptomatic of our reservations and of our intuition that there is something in the plena which evades all mathematization.⁶³

The sciences, striving to be universal, aim at a mathematization of the entire object and, subsequently, a mathematization of all objects. The possibility of moving from one object to the next is based on the connectedness of objects, designated by phenomenological analysis as the outer horizon of referential implications. When Husserl states that idealizing thought expands ‘also outwards toward the infinity of the world’,⁶⁴ he is pointing to the outer horizon. In the above-mentioned second supplementary text to the *Crisis*, he describes idealization as a two-step process in which, first, ideas are formed on the basis of appearances and, second, ideas are combined to form ‘configuration of ideas’ (*Ideengebilde*).⁶⁵ In this fashion, a ‘realm’ or ‘world’ of pure limit shapes emerges.⁶⁶ This ideal world consists of ideas which can be fully determined and stand in causal relation to each other; these relations can be described unequivocally and infallibly through mathematical laws. Such ideas move from one place in ideal space

to another with a specific, uniform or uniformly increased speed such that an exact determination of their location can be given.

The indirect mathematization of the plena made it possible for the natural sciences to unequivocally mathematize the world in its entirety. As a result, the sciences presume that they have left the naive attitude of everyday consciousness far behind.

The decisive next step consists of relating the world of idealities to the pre- and non-scientific lifeworld: The lifeworld is subordinated and measured against the ideal world. There is a 'surreptitious substitution of the mathematically substructured world of idealities for the only real world, the one that is actually given through perception, that is ever experienced and experienceable – our everyday lifeworld'.⁶⁷ If it were possible to relate the intuitable lifeworld and the world of idealities in this fashion, then the indeterminacy and subject-relativity of the lifeworld would simply point to the exactness of the scientific world and would be 'sublated', as it were. However, something essential is disregarded in the subordination of the intuitive lifeworld. This oversight is the reason why the contrast between the lifeworld and the world of idealities cannot be sustained and the lifeworld cannot be restricted to its narrow sense as opposed to the natural scientific world. Overlooked is the fact that the natural sciences are not just grounded in the lifeworld but even belong to it.

Concerning the first point, the sciences presuppose the lifeworld not only because they historically emerged in and from the lifeworld (this aspect might indeed no longer play an essential role). Rather, the lifeworld 'continuously' provides the ground for the scientists since the latter use measuring instruments given to intuition, and so on.⁶⁸ Second, the sciences themselves are encompassed by the lifeworld. In order to explain how this is the case, Husserl coins the expression 'flowing into' (*Einströmen*). The results of scientific research flow into the lifeworld and become sedimented here, such that we often handle them without knowing it.⁶⁹ Scientists use technical equipment without reflecting on this usage, just as writers use computers of high technical standard and usually only reflect on the texts they are writing rather than on the computer. Husserl explains that the phenomenon of 'flowing into' lets the opposition of lifeworld and the world of idealities collapse.⁷⁰ The lifeworld is much more than a mere pre- and non-scientific world; as the all-encompassing, concrete world of our life or universal horizon, it includes the sciences as well. The lifeworld in the encompassing and genuine sense is the historical world which contains nature as well as culture.

However, the narrow sense of the lifeworld does not become superfluous; rather, the lifeworld as intuitive world is sublated in the encompassing lifeworld, as it were. For disclosing the ideal world of the sciences and the way in which it is founded in the pre- and outer-scientific of mere intuition, the

narrow concept of lifeworld as a contrastive notion is necessary.⁷¹ The lifeworld in the genuine sense encompasses the intuitive world as well as the scientific world of idealities.

ONTOLOGY OF THE LIFEWORLD

The lifeworld in this inclusive sense is thus no ‘partial problem’ but ‘a universal problem for philosophy’.⁷² Yet if the lifeworld is supposed to become a theme for philosophy, a difficulty arises: How can the lifeworld in its subject-relativity be investigated philosophically? Husserl deems the project of an ‘ontology of the lifeworld’ important,⁷³ but he never executes it in any comprehensive fashion. Apart from indications for an ontology of the lifeworld in certain late manuscripts,⁷⁴ Husserl sketches in the *Crisis* what direction such an ontology might take and what its presuppositions would be. One important presupposition concerns the lifeworld as having ‘in all its relative features, a *general structure*’ which is ‘not itself relative’⁷⁵ – hence the quest for irrelative or invariant structures of the lifeworld which form a ‘lifeworld a priori’.⁷⁶ The talk of invariant structures does not mean that these would be given in an ever same, unchanging fashion. Invariant structures are always concretely given in an historically mediated form; nevertheless its structure as such does persist throughout these changes. Examples for such structures are the transcendental modalities of the lifeworld as horizon (*Horizont*) and ground (*Boden*).⁷⁷

Horizon and ground are two inseparable, complementary modalities of the lifeworld. The first one emphasizes especially the temporal, the second the spatial aspect of the lifeworld. While his early philosophy places an emphasis on the horizon as temporal as well as spatial, Husserl characterizes the horizon in the *Crisis* as a ‘vital horizon’, which includes ‘old acquisitions’ and old values which are presupposed in an unquestioned fashion.⁷⁸ These ‘acquisitions’ structure our life, even if they happen to be currently rather insignificant; they co-determine our life without becoming thematic and can be revived.

The notion of ground is discussed in the *Crisis* in various places. The lifeworld provides the (forgotten) ground for the modern natural sciences. However, this concept of ground presupposes the narrow, preliminary concept of lifeworld in contrast to the world of the sciences.⁷⁹ Husserl suggests a closer examination of the lifeworld in its function as ground⁸⁰ yet undertakes this examination in a different place, particularly in the manuscripts ‘Notes on the Constitution of Space’ and ‘Fundamental Investigations into the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature’. The titles of these manuscripts already imply that ground, here more specifically the earthground

(*Erdboden*), designates the way in which the spatiality of the lifeworld is constituted. In order to examine the nature of the earthground, Husserl returns to his reflections on the lived body (*Leib*). Just as the lived body is a zero point, an absolute 'here' which gives meaning to movement and rest,⁸¹ the same holds on the 'macro-level' also for the earth: 'In the original shape of its presentation the earth itself does not move itself and does not rest; only in relation to it do rest and motion first have sense';⁸² in this way, the earth is ground.⁸³

These indications concerning the invariant structures of the lifeworld must suffice at this point.⁸⁴ The function of the lifeworld as ground can serve as an example for the way in which the modern natural sciences conceal the nature of the lifeworld. In scientific research, the role of the earthground is negated, and the earth turns into a mere body, more specifically, a 'total-body' (*Totalkörper*).⁸⁵ The earth as body is one of many cosmic bodies, and it moves in relation to these other bodies. Yet if we were not first and foremost grounded on the earth, we would not even know what movement means. Generally speaking, the modern natural sciences regard the world as an object or a totality, and this is a fundamental misapprehension; there 'exists a fundamental difference between the way we are conscious of the world and the way we are conscious of things or objects'.⁸⁶ Objects can be given only as objects in the world, and the world is not given, but always already pregiven. The 'questioning concerning the world's givenness'⁸⁷ is a basic phenomenological question which remains entirely outside of the scientific perspective.

The way in which the sciences conceive of the world as an object provides evidence for Husserl's thesis that the sciences basically remain in the natural attitude. The attitude of the modern sciences could be designated as 'a natural attitude of a second order'⁸⁸ or, as Husserl describes it in *Ideas II*, a 'naturalistic attitude'. The scientific attitude shares several characteristics with the natural attitude; it strictly separates subject and object, attributes a being to the object which would be independent from its being-for-consciousness and considers the object as the essential component (in comparison to the inessential subject). These essential features hold for the modern sciences even more so than for the everyday, pre- and non-scientific attitude; therefore, this version of the natural attitude can possess the attribute 'second order' or the intensification 'naturalistic'. This intensification is not confined to an emphasis on the object of research but means a conscious and preferred complete exclusion of the researching subject. This is the meaning of the sciences' quest for objectivity and subject-irrelativity.

The modern natural sciences are thus characterized by a twofold forgetfulness. They forget the researching subject (and thus human subjectivity as a whole), on the one hand, and the lifeworld, on the other.⁸⁹ This twofold forgetfulness makes the natural scientific attitude almost entirely insusceptible

to philosophical critique.⁹⁰ In the pre-scientific attitude, the contribution of the subject becomes obvious, for example, in the way in which the subject is involved in perception, for perception is no mere passive reception of impressions. This becomes apparent particularly in the horizontality of perception. We can change our perspective regarding the object, and it is constitutive for perception that several perspectives exist. Due to perception's horizontality, we are also aware of the world horizon, albeit unthematically. The natural attitude in its everyday version thus allows for a change of attitude if the correlation between consciousness and world is recognized and the natural world belief is bracketed, as shall be explored in the next chapter of this study.

The natural sciences, in contrast, turn the world into an object and thus forget about its genuine character as horizontal lifeworld. At the same time, the sciences strive to exclude the subject's contribution altogether. In his historical reflections in the *Crisis*, Husserl shows how this quest for absolute objectivity cannot be fulfilled. Scientific research is always founded on the lifeworldly praxis of the researcher; it remains tied to it and flows back into the lifeworld. Once these connections are elucidated, the natural scientific attitude can be transformed into the philosophical attitude. The necessity of philosophical questioning emerges from the crisis which Husserl diagnoses. Not only can the subject-independence not be accomplished, but it is a dangerous illusion since the subject in its research presumes itself to be liberated from responsibility. Reminding humans of their responsibility and calling them to thorough self-analysis is perhaps the most important of Husserl's concerns in the *Crisis*.⁹¹

Hegel's analysis of the three worlds in the chapter on understanding provides guidance or a leading clue for relating Husserl's different concepts of the lifeworld to each other. Although the interpretation given here finds continuous support in Husserl's reflections on the lifeworld, Husserl does not explain how the different concepts of the lifeworld are connected to each other. He does not even state clearly that there are different concepts in play. The encompassing concept of the lifeworld emerges when the original, narrow concept of the lifeworld, which was formed by way of contrast to the world of the sciences, cannot be sustained in its separation.

Hegel's considerations thus prove helpful for a closer elucidation of Husserl's concept of the lifeworld – and in retrospect, the essential flaw of Hegel's chapter on understanding comes to the fore. Even though the various worlds and their relation to each other are constantly discussed, Hegel does not develop a concept of world as such. The world which is so central for Husserl's phenomenology is missing not only in Hegel's chapter on perception (such that the connection between things cannot be appropriately

considered) but also in the chapter on understanding. This lack causes problems concerning the relation between perception and understanding.

Husserl, in contrast, can clarify the relation between perception and the scientific approach. Perception strives for the closer determination of the object (i.e. of its inner horizon). The idea of the completely determined object not only is thus the goal of the sciences, but exists as an unfulfilable ideal already in the lifeworld and thus provides the motivational ground of scientific research.

Hegel conceives of the world as if it were an object. This might also be the reason that Hegel discusses the preliminary conceptions of world (sensible world, first supersensible world, inverted world in the provisional sense) in detail, while providing almost no account of the second supersensible world in the genuine sense (which would be closest to the lifeworld or world as we know it). The lack of a concept of the world not only makes the relation back to the level of perception less obvious, but even the transition to self-consciousness remains partly in the dark. Consciousness encounters itself since the laws are products of the understanding yet are supposed, as explanations, to relate to the phenomena of the sensible world, such that in the end no differentiation is possible.

Husserl's examinations of the lifeworld as ground for the sciences, on the one hand, and the 'flowing' of scientific results into the lifeworld, on the other, exhibit the connection between the two worlds more clearly. In particular, Husserl's interpretation of the sciences with emphasis on their objectivism reveals the essential oversight of the sciences: the subject. Husserl also investigates the relation between subject and world or, rather, between consciousness and world. Consciousness and world are two sides of the same coin, as it were. Hegel can make a statement of this kind for things or objects, as when he points out that the thing is 'I'. Yet it becomes immediately obvious how a more developed concept of world – as Hegel could have developed it in the chapter on understanding at the latest – would be beneficial in formulating his idealism (because the point of idealism is not, of course, that a thing like the table is 'I' but that the whole is 'I').

The natural sciences are concerned with the context; they are sciences of the world. Since the appearing world is too indeterminate and vague for the exact sciences, they transgress this world towards a supersensible world. In effect, the supersensible world becomes the true world and thus the criterion against which the appearing world is measured. However, philosophical investigation shows that the scientists, in this process, attribute certain features to the world which misconceive the world as phenomenon. An important question is whether phenomenology can account more successfully for the nature of the world and its process character than the sciences can (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

NOTES

1. Eugen Fink, *Hegel: Phänomenologische Interpretation der 'Phänomenologie des Geistes'* (*Phenomenological Interpretation of the 'Phenomenology of Spirit'*) (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1977), 117.

2. See Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Werner Marx, *Das Selbstbewußtsein in Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes* (*Self-Consciousness in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*) (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1986); Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980) as well as Chapter 7.

3. Most interpretations and commentaries on this chapter refer at some point to the natural sciences but do not follow this line of interpretation through. Especially in the context of interpreting Hegel's examples for the 'inverted world', interpreters turn away from Hegel's scientific examples. See the next section of the current chapter.

4. H.S. Harris, *Hegel's Ladder* (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 1997), 265.

5. 'Modern natural sciences' here designates the natural sciences of the modern era which took their point of departure from Galileo. Husserl explains in his *Crisis* why the modern mathematization of nature constitutes an essential step that distinguishes the modern sciences from all pre-modern sciences. See the relevant section of this chapter.

6. Hegel, PhS, 145/185. The translation has been supplemented since it left out the phrase 'sondern mit der Gewißheit, dies Andere selbst zu sein'.

7. Hegel, PhS, 80/108.

8. 'Die Kraft [drückt] die Idee des Verhältnisses selbst aus', in *Jenenser Logik, Metaphysik und Naturphilosophie* (*Jena Logic, Metaphysics, and Philosophy of Nature*), ed. G. Lasson, 50 (cited in Martin Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988], 150).

9. For example, Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*; Eugen Fink, *Hegel: Phänomenologische Interpretation der 'Phänomenologie des Geistes'* (*Hegel: Phenomenological Interpretation of the 'Phenomenology of Spirit'*) (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1977); Joseph C. Flay, 'Hegel's "Inverted world"', in *G.W.F. Hegel – Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. O. Pöggeler et al. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998), 89–105. Concerning Flay's interpretation, I agree with Harris's comment, namely, that Flay is right in relating the chapter to Leibniz and Kant yet fails to clarify these relations (Harris, *Hegel's Ladder*, 313).

10. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. P. Guyer et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), A80/B106.

11. Hegel, *Jenenser Logik*, 49 f.; cited in Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, 152.

12. Hegel, PhS, 85/114.

13. Hegel, PhS, 83/111.

14. Hegel, PhS, 86/116.

15. Hegel, PhS, 78/106.

16. Hegel, PhS, 27/46.

17. Hegel, PhS, 87/116.

18. Hegel, PhS, 87/117.

19. The result is no 'empty nothing, but must necessarily be grasped as the nothing of that from which it results' (Hegel, PhS, 79 f./56). Concerning the topic of determinate negation, see Chapter 1.

20. Hegel, PhS, 89/118.

21. Hegel, PhS, 90/120.

22. Hegel, PhS, 91/120.

23. Eugen Fink writes: 'It is of utmost significance though that there is no explicit question of world emerging here, that it rather only occurs in the shape of the wholeness of all things (*Ganzheit aller Dinge*) where the unique character of this wholeness is not being considered. Hegel operates with an undeveloped, yes we must say, with the vulgar concept of world. Therein lies a weak spot; he does not sufficiently secure the base for moving on' (Fink, *Hegel*, 138).

24. Hegel, PhS, 97/128.

25. Furthermore, some interpreters provide additional examples which are more or less elucidating. Gadamer's example of the satire, which criticizes the status quo by inverting it, strikes me as more helpful than Hyppolite's reference to gospel singing (Hans-Georg Gadamer, 'Hegel – die verkehrte Welt,' ('Hegel – the Inverted World') in *Hegels Dialektik (Hegel's Dialectics)* [Tübingen: Mohr, 1971], 43; Jean Hyppolite, *Genèse et structure de la Phénoménologie de l'Esprit de Hegel (Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit)* [Paris: Aubier, 1946], 132 ff.).

26. Hegel, PhS, 97/129. When Hegel first mentions his examples, he uses the grammatical form of the indicative (Hegel, PhS, 97/128). Yet Hegel usually first affirms a position, only in order to reveal it as erroneous. Already on the next page, Hegel introduces the superficial nature of this position which he then increasingly reveals as superficial.

27. Hegel, PhS, 98/129.

28. Ibid.

29. Fink holds this position; he describes the examples as 'unfortunate' and maintains that it is 'extremely difficult' to follow them (Fink, *Hegel*, 148).

30. This is also Flay's position when he claims that the initial characterization of the inverted world presents the view that the supersensible world is opposed to the first world rather than containing it: Flay, 'Hegel's "Inverted world"', 102.

31. Hegel, PhS, 99/130.

32. Hegel, PhS, 99/131.

33. Hegel's concept of the infinite cannot be explored in any detail here; see *Science of Logic I*. Second Chapter: Determinate Being, C. Infinity.

34. Hegel, PhS, 101/132f.

35. Hegel, PhS, 101/134.

36. Hegel, PhS, 102/135.

37. The 'Kantian' reading is proposed in particular by Robert Pippin and John Stewart (Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfaction of Self-Consciousness* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], Chapter 6.3: 'The inverted world', 131–142; John Stewart, *The Unity of Hegel's 'Phenomenology of Spirit'* [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2000], 99 ff.). For the 'practical' reading, see, for example, H.S. Harris, *Hegel's Ladder*, 308 ff. and Robert Stern, *Routledge Philosophy GuideBook to Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit* (London: Routledge, 2002), 67 ff.

38. Cf. the title of the Vienna lecture on which *Crisis* text is based: 'Philosophy and the Crisis of European Humanity' (*Die Krisis des europäischen Menschentums und die Philosophie*) (Husserl, Hua VI, 314/269).

39. Husserl, Hua VI, 4/6.

40. Cf. especially Ulrich Claesges, 'Zweideutigkeiten in Husserls Lebenswelt-Begriff', ('Ambiguities in Husserl's Concept of the Lifeworld') in *Perspektiven transzendental-phänomenologischer Forschung*, (*Perspectives in Transcendental Phenomenological Research*) ed. U. Claesges et al. (The Hague: Kluwer, 1972); Klaus Held, 'Husserls neue Einführung in die Philosophie: Der Begriff der Lebenswelt' ('Husserl's new Introduction to Philosophy: the Concept of the Lifeworld'), in *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft. Studien zum Verhältnis von Phänomenologie und Wissenschaftstheorie (Lifeworld and Science. Studies on the Relation of Phenomenology and Scientific Theory)*, ed. C.F. Gethmann (Bonn: Bouvier, 1991), 79–11; Bernhard Waldenfels, 'Verstehen und Verständigung. Zur Sozialphilosophie von A. Schütz' ('Understanding and Communication. On the A. Schütz' Social Philosophy'), in *Alfred Schütz und die Idee des Alltags in den Sozialwissenschaften (Alfred Schütz and the Idea of the Everyday in the Social Sciences)*, ed. W.M. Sprondel et al. (Stuttgart: Enke, 1979), 1–12; as well as Chapters 6 and 7 in Anthony J. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond. Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995). The current study supports the thesis that the different concepts of the lifeworld do not contradict each other but develop out of each other, emphasizing different aspects of the lifeworld. These different aspects are explained convincingly in Held, 'Der Begriff der Lebenswelt' as he outlines and defeats possible objections.

41. James Dodd maintains that 'obviousness' (*Selbstverständlichkeit*) is 'perhaps the single most important concept of the *Crisis*' (James Dodd, *Crisis and Reflection: An Essay on Husserl's Crisis of the European Sciences* [The Hague: Kluwer], 68). While I would not go so far as to consider it more important than crisis or history, I appreciate Dodd's interpretation because he shows the connections between obviousness and history: Our sedimented history is exactly that which we take for granted and which is, in that sense, hidden from us.

42. Such access is Husserl's goal in *Crisis* when he suggests first undertaking an *epoché* regarding all objective sciences, which is 'not merely an abstraction from them' but means to abstain from all participation (Husserl, Hua VI, 138/135). Concerning the *epoché*, see Chapter 1.

43. Husserl, Hua VI, 108/106 & 113/111.

44. Husserl, Hua IX, 59.

45. Iso Kern, 'Die Lebenswelt als Grundlagenproblem der objektiven Wissenschaften und als universales Wahrheits- und Seinsproblem', ('The Lifeworld as Fundamental Problem of the Objective Sciences and as Universal Problem of Truth and Being') in *Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft in der Philosophie Edmund Husserls (Lifeworld and Science in the Philosophy of Edmund Husserl)*, ed. E. Ströker (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1979), 71. Kern is citing the 1927 lecture course 'Nature and Spirit'.

46. Husserl, Hua IX, 56.

47. Husserl, Hua VI, 125/127.

48. Husserl, Hua VI, 23/20.

49. See especially Appendix II in Husserl, Hua VI.
50. Husserl, Hua VI, 25/22.
51. Ibid.
52. Husserl, Hua VI, 25/23.
53. Husserl, Hua VI, 26/23.
54. Husserl, Hua VI, 359.
55. Husserl, Hua VI, 21/19.
56. Husserl, Hua VI, 29/27.
57. Husserl, Hua VI, 30/27 ff.
58. Husserl, Hua VI, 34/33.
59. Husserl, Hua VI, 35/33.
60. Husserl, Hua VI, 37/36.
61. Husserl, Hua VI, 36/34.
62. Husserl, Hua VI, 36/35.
63. That which evades all mathematization might, in fact, be the very essence of the plena which would call for phenomenological rather than scientific analysis. Heidegger describes this evasion in his 'The Origin of the Work of Art' as follows: 'Color shines and wants only to shine. When we analyze it in rational terms by measuring its wavelengths, it is gone' (Martin Heidegger, 'The Origin of the Work of Art', in *Basic Writings*, ed. D.F. Krell. [San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993], 172).
64. Husserl, Hua VI, 360.
65. Husserl, Hua VI, 361.
66. Husserl, Hua VI, 26 ff./23ff.
67. Husserl, Hua VI, 49/49.
68. Husserl, Hua VI, 123 f./121 f.
69. Husserl, Hua VI, 113/115 and 138 fn./141 fn.
70. Husserl, Hua VI, 462.
71. Claesges, 'Zweideutigkeiten in Husserls Lebenswelt-Begriff', 93.
72. Husserl, Hua VI, § 34 f.
73. For example, Husserl, Hua VI, § 37.
74. For example, Husserl, 'The Anthropological World' (Nr. 28, Hua XXIX). See Chapter 10.
75. Husserl, Hua VI, 139/142.
76. Husserl, Hua VI, 140/143.
77. For more detail, see Anthony J. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995), Chapter 7.
78. Husserl, Hua VI, 149/152.
79. Moreover, Husserl uses the problematic formulation of elevating ourselves *above* the ground of the world by way of the phenomenological *epoché* – and thus above the ground on which the sciences remain (Husserl, Hua VI, 155/152); see Chapter 8: 'Husserl's Historical Phenomenology'.
80. Husserl, Hua VI, 154/158.
81. Husserl, 'Notizen', 27 ff.
82. Husserl, 'Grundlegende Untersuchungen', 309.

83. It would be interesting to examine the relation between Husserl's reflections on horizon and ground and Heidegger's essay 'The Origin of the Work of Art'. Heidegger shows how artworks set up the world of an historical people and set forth the earth as concealing ground. See Chapter 10 and Postscript.

84. In Chapter 6, two further invariant structures of the lifeworld are being investigated: homeworld and alienworld.

85. Husserl, 'Grundlegende Untersuchungen', 308.

86. Husserl, Hua VI, 143/146.

87. Husserl, Hua VI, 154/156 f.

88. Held, 'Der Begriff der Lebenswelt', 96; Husserl speaks of 'naïveté on a higher level' (Husserl, Hua XVII, 353).

89. Donn Welton, *The Other Husserl: The Horizons of Transcendental Phenomenology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), Chapter 14.

90. The following considerations are based on Held, 'Der Begriff der Lebenswelt', 100 ff.

91. Husserl, Hua VI, § 7.

Chapter 4

Moving Down: Origins of Perceptions

Socrates: 'Perception, then, is always of something that is, and, as being knowledge, it is infallible.'

Plato, *Theaetetus*, 152c¹

After we have seen that the move 'up' from perception to the scientific standpoint harbours the danger of not staying sufficiently connected to the normal world we live in and for which we carry responsibility, we will now investigate the move 'down'. Moving down here signifies the move to a level more fundamental than perception, a level that 'grounds' perception, so to speak. Both Hegel and Husserl argue that such a level can be traced and investigated, though it poses special problems for the investigation. Hegel starts his account in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* with this level, attending to sense-certainty in his first chapter. We have so far not attended to that chapter because it creates some problems for the reader which can better be tackled from the standpoint we have reached now. The kind of certainty provided by immediate sense experience prior to perceiving a full-fledged object is the certainty of the existence of that which is given in such experiences. Yet it will turn out that even on this primordial level, we already encounter disappointments. What we were aiming at proves to be different from our expectation, or it alludes us. What is it that plays the decisive role in moving beyond sense-certainty, in Hegel, and passivity, in Husserl? – language, which involves time and intersubjectivity.

SENSE-CERTAINTY IN HEGEL

Why does the *Phenomenology of Spirit* begin with sense-certainty? In order to find an answer to this question, we need to consider in a preliminary fashion what happens on the level of sense-certainty. It may appear unusual at

first that the ‘object’ of sense-certainty is exactly not an object yet, namely, no object in the genuine sense, but something that could be called a ‘qualitative state’, the character of which needs to be illuminated here.²

In line with the Hegelian dialectics, we are going to follow sense-certainty in its three steps. The primary question will concern sense-certainty as an immediate knowledge. A further important question involves sense-certainty’s independence: Does sense-certainty even exist as a level of consciousness? It becomes obvious that sense-certainty cannot be separated off as a self-sufficient domain, and yet it designates an important aspect of perception, namely, certainty concerning the object’s existence.

The first sentence of the first chapter in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* already identifies several crucial aspects of sense-certainty: ‘The knowledge or knowing which is at the start or is immediately our object cannot be anything else but immediate knowledge itself, a knowledge of the immediate or of what simply *is*.’³ The expression ‘*our* object’ refers to us as readers who join natural consciousness on its pathway. Our object is twofold since it is a knowledge with its object: immediate knowledge along with its object, the immediate. Hegel wants to start with the immediate since, as he has explained in the ‘Introduction’ (see Chapter 1 of this book), the aim is to leave presuppositions behind as much as possible, and we cannot presume that any particular position has yet been justified and accepted.

We should note that immediacy is a negative determination; it says what the immediate is *not*, namely, it is not mediated. This negative determination reveals the restlessness of this beginning; it is impossible to remain here. Knowledge, as well as its object, is immediate. The knowledge does not yet have its own shape or form; it is mere openness-for, plain receptivity. To the extent that the knowledge simply receives its object without modifying it in any way, sense-certainty seems to be the ‘truest’ insight. Moreover, it appears to be the ‘richest’, for its object is the immediate, the manifold of what is given to the senses. The infinite plethora of what is given to the senses extends infinitely in space and time. And yet, as Hegel informs us right at the beginning, this certainty turns out to be the ‘most abstract and poorest *truth*’ since it asserts about its object just that it *is*, and nothing further.⁴ The manifold of that which is given to the senses has in common that it *is*. Since sense-certainty knows nothing else than this, it already becomes obvious that what it grasps is not an object in the full and genuine sense; in contrast to perception, it does not know something *as something*, but just something *as being*.⁵

It is the nature and purpose of sense experience to be fully immersed in that which is given to it. Sense-certainty is at first entirely devoted to its object which it takes to be essential – in contrast to knowing which is non-essential. This object is a merely singular one or a mere ‘this’. The ‘this’ comes to appearance in space and time, as ‘here’ and ‘now’.⁶ In order to get

to know sense-certainty more closely, we pose the question: 'What is now?' In Hegel's example, we receive the answer: 'Now is night.'⁷ A true statement does not become false by being written down, so we write this answer down. But now, at noon, the truth has become stale. This example shows how sense-certainty usually deals with qualitative states like night-time, darkness, coldness and warmth. Of course, things like trees and houses can also be grasped by sense-certainty, yet what is known in such cases is not the tree *as* tree, but the tree as a being that can be replaced by a different being.

Sense-certainty thus has to realize that it cannot maintain what it takes to be the truth – be it the night as being now or the tree as being here. It was aiming at something singular and immediate but had to instantaneously acknowledge a difference: the difference between example and essence or between singular and universal. What turns out to be the true object of sense-certainty is the 'this' as now and here. The 'this' is a universal because it is never just this or that, yet can be this or that and is 'with equal indifference' this or that.⁸ Sense-certainty meant something singular and arrived at a universal; consequently, a second moment of sense-certainty has emerged. Before observing the further development of sense-certainty, an objection against Hegel's procedure needs to be considered.

Concerning Hegel's first example, the question arises (and has frequently been posed)⁹ as to whether Hegel is justified to phrase the problem in these terms or whether he might be forcing or tricking natural consciousness to establish an easier entry point for his dialectic.¹⁰ When translated most literally, Hegel makes natural consciousness say 'The "now" is the night' (*Das Jetzt ist die Nacht*), and the definite article already points to a universal. It sounds more likely for natural consciousness to say 'Now is night' or even 'It's night now'. Even though Hegel's formulation of this response already prescribes a definite direction for his analysis, it seems to me that his analysis would not yield different results if a different formulation was taken as the starting point. Longer elaborations might be necessary, but the consequences would still be the same.

The most important question, however, concerns the status of sense-certainty. Is sense-certainty an independent level? Hegel says in the *Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences* that sense-certainty is an abstract level, while perception is the perspective of our everyday consciousness.¹¹ Perception is the first level that really exists; sense-certainty is rather a particular aspect of perception that is singled out. If this is so, then there has to be a certain justification for such singling out. Sense-certainty reflects that the insight that the certainty of something existing, which our intuitive experience delivers to us, underlies all knowledge. In order for me to know about something and to pass certain judgments, something has to be given to me.

The necessity to win certainty about the existence of a particular object (not, however, an object in any strict sense) already shows up in Kant's philosophy when he, in the context of refuting the ontological proof of God's existence, notes that being is no real predicate.¹² An ontological proof of God, so Kant says, is not possible because I can attribute the highest predicates to a thing and still know nothing about its existence. Attributing existence to a thing does not add anything to the concept. Kant explains: '[F]or although nothing is missing in my concept of the possible real content of a thing in general, something is still missing in the relation to my entire state of thinking, namely that the cognition of this object should also be possible a posteriori.'¹³ We need to step outside of the concept of the object in order to be able to attribute existence to it. 'With objects of sense' – and these are the objects perception is concerned with – 'this happens through the connection with some perception of mine in accordance with empirical laws.'¹⁴ That which Kant here names 'some perception of mine' corresponds to sense-certainty in Hegel; it yields certainty of the object's existence. Since we arrive at sense-certainty when we question perception, it has to necessarily designate the beginning stage.

The mere certainty of the existence of something occurs prior to speech, thus prior to predication; Husserl will therefore designate this realm as pre-predicative. When sense-certainty is asked to put its truth into predications, it has already left its original region. Hegel says explicitly that it is not possible ever to *say* a sensual being which we *mean*.¹⁵ However, language is what is 'more truthful', for it expresses what has turned out to be the genuine truth of sense-certainty, namely, the universal. Language is therefore nothing that we should try to evade in order to stay with sense-certainty, since it brings this certainty's truth to expression. More important, however, is the fact that it is not possible to avoid language: Sense-certainty might even be mute to the outside world, but it always has to talk things over with itself, however tacitly, if it wants to be certain of something. Sense-certainty already involves a silent talking which says about its object that it *is*.¹⁶ Thus, sense-certainty has to enter into dialectics (*dia-legein*), talking through or talking over. We cannot evade language, and once we have left the level of pure sensuous apprehension, we are led to move on to the level of full-fledged perception.

Language brings to the fore the insight that sense-certainty's object is always already something universal. What is universal does not belong to the side of the object but to the side of knowledge. Knowledge harbours the universal that superintends its many exemplifications. Knowledge is no longer subordinate to the object's truth; rather, the object *is* insofar as I know it. Yet this second moment of sense-certainty has as little chance to succeed as the first one. Within the strict separation of knowing and what is known, truth is now attributed to the other side, but the second moment in its one-sidedness

undergoes the same destiny as the first moment. For instance, the individual 'me' dissolves into the universal 'me'; if I say 'me', I say what everybody can say. Hence, here again we arrive at the universal even though we were aiming at the particular.

Sense-certainty thus recognizes that its truth is not to be found on either of the two sides. In a third and last attempt, sense-certainty tries to assert its truth by establishing it in the whole formed by the relation of knowledge and the known object. On this third level, we move deeper into sense-certainty before we leave it behind. Sense-certainty on this third level is dealing with a 'now' once more but a 'now' that is prior to any split into two sides. This 'now' is hence not divided into an 'I' and its object. Sense-certainty is so deeply immersed in itself that we cannot make it speak, for speech would already mean a certain distance; at most, it is willing to *show* its 'now' to us. Yet even such pointing is destined to fail: The 'now' as it is shown has already passed by. What has been is not, and 'it was with *being* that we were concerned'.¹⁷ The result of sense-certainty's investigations is that the mere 'is' already designates a movement, that is, already has a history.¹⁸ Sense-certainty assumed that being is consistent and reliable, but this has proven to be a mistake.

The fact that sense-certainty can never get to what it actually means is grounded in the essence of time as a continuous movement. Every 'now' that we want to grasp and point to has, in this very moment, already turned into something that has passed. Time plays the decisive role in Husserl's analysis of passivity which we will now turn to.

THE LEVEL OF PASSIVITY IN HUSSERL

Like Hegel, who wants the way of consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* to start with the very first and most primordial level, Husserl as well goes back to the most fundamental level which founds perception in the usual sense. Husserl's investigation into how we come to pass judgments about the perceptual world leads him to discover that the predicative level points to an underlying founding level, that of the prepredicative – a term which first simply designates that which occurs prior to predication. The prepredicative sphere belongs to the domain which Husserl names 'pretheoretical';¹⁹ another essential part of this sphere is the realm of passivity which Husserl examines in detail. Prepredicativity and passivity overlap considerably, yet are not identical. An example of a prepredicative, yet not passive, phenomenon is active remembering.²⁰ At the same time, there are passive, yet predicative, phenomena: Speech encompasses passive components even on the level of predicative speech (e.g. when I anticipate how a sentence will continue).

It will turn out that passivity as well as prepredicativity point to what lies beyond them.

Even though passivity and prepredicativity are intimately connected, passivity seems to correspond more closely to sense-certainty in Hegel: Prepredicative remembering already leads us to perception. The expression 'passive' is used, as Husserl himself explains, in lack of a more appropriate expression for the phenomena in question.²¹ It is thus important to understand what belongs to this level which founds all activity of the ego. In his *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*, Husserl analyses everything that enables us to perceive things – such as associations, doubts, disappointments and fulfilments of expectations and modifications. All of these phenomena are grounded in a pervasive structure of consciousness, namely, intentionality. Intentionality does not just mean that consciousness is always consciousness of something but that it is directed towards its object in a dynamic fashion, wanting to get a closer and closer grasp of this object ('object' taken in the broadest sense).

Husserl describes the character of intentionality as follows: 'The intention is directed toward its object; it does not want to be a merely empty intending toward it; it wants to go to the object itself – to the object itself, that is, to an intuition that gives the object itself, to an intuition that is in itself the consciousness of having a self.'²² This intention is not satisfied with a first fulfilment, for example, with touching the object, but strives for ever more complete determination. This striving continues until all indeterminacy and all dissatisfaction are eliminated – and this in turn depends on circumstances and aims which are very different for the natural scientist than for the artist or the phenomenologist. If the object is given to me in such a way that it does not point beyond its present givenness any more, it is given to me originally or in the mode of self-evidence. Every intention strives for fulfilment with self-evidence.

The structure of intentionality thus designates consciousness's essential feature of continuously striving for the fulfilment of its intentions, yet this also means that we permanently face the risk of disappointment. *Experience and Judgement* offers an example which Husserl takes up again, under the heading 'Retroactive Crossing Out', in *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*. The example concerns a red ball which turns out to be green and dented on the back side. We shall sketch out this example here since Husserl himself claims that this example serves to trace 'the original phenomenon of negation'. This means that 'negation is not first the business of the act of predicative judgement but that in its original form it already appears in the prepredicative sphere of receptive experience'.²³ Those descriptions which lead Husserl to this conclusion are in several ways reminiscent of Hegel's dialectic, as we will see.

I see an object which I take to be a uniformly red ball. My intention, my expectation, is thus that no matter how I turn and twist the ball, I will find red ballshapedness everywhere. Yet instead, I realize that the backside of the object is green and dented. My intention has been disappointed – but it happens even more than that. I know that the object has not just now changed its shape and colour on the backside but was green and dented there before. Hence a retroactive crossing-out happens: During the entire preceding time, I was (without knowing it) dealing with an object that was not uniformly red and ball shaped.²⁴ At the same time, I am still aware of my original intention, only now in the mode of being crossed out. Husserl says that we are ‘still conscious of the previous sense, but as “painted over”, and where the corresponding moments are concerned, crossed out’.²⁵

This phenomenon is explicitly designated as ‘sublation’ (*Aufhebung*) by Husserl, and even though it is not a dialectical process in the Hegelian sense, we can recognize the aspects of sublation. The old or previous sense has been crossed out and, in that sense, negated, yet we are still aware of it, that is, it is still recognizable and thus preserved. Furthermore, the result belongs to a higher order as we have gained more exact knowledge of the object which is now originally given to us.²⁶

All phenomena of the passive domain presuppose the syntheses of time-consciousness, and it is already on the level of time-consciousness that a primordial shape of intention and fulfilment/disappointment occurs. The syntheses of time-consciousness, retention and protention, are the most basic and, at the same time, the most abstract²⁷ elements of passivity. In its briefest formulation, retention is the holding on to the now in its slipping away, protention the forward-directing to the coming now.²⁸ Without retention and protention, we would not be able to follow the course of a melody or understand a single sentence.

The phenomenon of retroactive crossing-out presupposes retention and protention; the retroactivity means exactly that the crossing-out radiates back into the ‘retentional sphere’.²⁹ The process in question does not consist in us remembering and consciously replacing the new sense for the old one in the past; rather, we are immediately aware that the unitary sense of the object includes, and has included, its different surface structure on the backside. Similarly, it would not be possible without the syntheses of time-consciousness to have associations,³⁰ which Husserl designates as the principle of passive synthesis.³¹ There only exists a structuring of the sensual field along the lines of identity, similarity and contrast, or an affective awakening,³² if what is slipping away still remains somewhat present and if I am already directed, in an inclusive fashion, towards what is to come.

Yet it is precisely within time-consciousness that we experience an inevitable disappointment: If we grasp a ‘now’ and want to focus our attention on it,

this 'now' has already passed by and is not a present 'now' any longer. Retentionality is this primordial tendency of holding on to what is slipping away; it always comes too late. The 'now' immediately passes over into the 'not now', into non-being – and in that sense, the 'now' is a persistent non-being.

Consciousness aims at grasping and retaining something; it is looking for something stable, something permanent in its own streaming. Within the domain of passivity, this feature of consciousness becomes apparent in retentionality, which does not yet constitute objects but their prefigurations, namely, object-like formations (*Gegenständlichkeiten*). Yet consciousness does not stop here, and it cannot do so. We cannot remain on the level of passivity, for we want to have full-fledged objects, and we want to be able to come back to them. The phenomenon of remembering makes obvious already on the level of time-consciousness that we strive to get beyond passivity. Remembering is connected to retentionality in the following fashion: Since every retention brings with it a further retention, a chain of retentions reaches into the past like a 'comet's tail'.³³ We are thus capable of representing past moments which are implicitly connected with the present moment through this chain of retentions, and we are able to do so without having to be aware of all the retentions lying in between.

For perceiving an object, remembering is necessary. Only by virtue of remembering is there an 'again and again (*immer wieder*)', and we owe it to remembering that something can be 're-identified' as the same.³⁴ This means, as Husserl sums up, that there is 'an abiding truth in contrast to the momentary truth'.³⁵ The wish and the need to hold on to that which is originally given in order to be certain of it also present the initial reason for sense-certainty in Hegel's *Phenomenology* to get entangled in contradictions. The example of writing down the sentence 'Now is night' to find out at noon that this sentence has lost its truth is a manifestation of remembering.

Without remembering, there would be no perception of external objects, for the spatiality of such objects means that they are given to us only one side at a time, thereby requiring that we remember previously perceived sides. Hence the first sentence of Husserl's *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*: 'External perception is a constant pretension to accomplish something that, by its very nature, it is not in a position to accomplish.'³⁶ Remembering is a necessary condition for objectivity; it enables us to connect the different sides of an object and to come back to this object as identically the same. 'All talk of objects thus leads back to remembering'³⁷ as well as to anticipation as the complement of remembering which Husserl also describes as remembering 'turned over'.³⁸

However, more needs to be fulfilled in order for an object to be given; remembering is necessary but not sufficient. The object must be something which others can perceive from different perspectives, even if I cannot take

them up myself in the present moment, and it must be an object about which I can communicate with others. Objectivity is accomplished through intersubjectivity, through a community of co-present subjects.³⁹ Therefore, speech has an essential function; after remembering has already led us to the border between passivity and activity,⁴⁰ speech leads us out of the realm of prepredicativity into the predicative sphere. In order to have objects in the strict sense we have to go beyond the prepredicative sphere.

Yet do speech and intersubjectivity really follow here in a necessary manner? Even if it is granted that I need to have an object as identical and name it in order for it to be a genuine object, could this not still happen on a predicative, yet egological or monological level, in talking it over with myself? And even if we go a step further and admit that objectivity is indeed only constituted by others, would it not consist merely in the silent perception of an object from different sides along with a factor of empathy: If I were there, I could see the object from the back side, and so on? With regard to this last question, it can be said that only in and through a conversation with others do I get to know that they do see the same object, and only in this way can I exchange information with them about it. Even if in a certain moment, there is nothing but silent perception, or even if there are no others present at all, nevertheless am I always already in a conversation with others. It follows regarding the first question that talking something through with myself in a monologue is a derivative form of my conversation with others. But is this really Husserl's claim?

There is an interesting shift in Husserl's philosophy:⁴¹ In *Logical Investigations*, monologue seems to be a fully valid and independent form of expression for Husserl, taking place in the 'solitary life of the soul',⁴² which proved to be so problematic for Jacques Derrida in his book *Speech and Phenomena*. Yet in a manuscript on language and communication written in 1931, Husserl explains that 'monological expressions in silent thinking' are to be considered as 'abnormal modes' of expression, and he says explicitly that he considers them such 'now',⁴³ that is, in contrast to the earlier theory. Our world is essentially determined by linguistic communication; communication co-constitutes our world and enriches it: 'We, subjects of worldly experience, have an endlessly open world ... through the others' mediation, and finally, their inter-communication.'⁴⁴

It is thus only by abstraction that can we get to a level prior to speech, prior to predication. Yet this does not diminish the significance of the analysis of passive synthesis, for all constitution of objects presupposes passive syntheses, and we are only certain about an object's existence insofar as it affects us as an object-like formation on an immediate, prepredicative level. Yet we would be mistaken if we assumed passivity to constitute an independent domain that could be separated from our activity. Active and passive realms

are always intertwined. Activity is founded in passivity and sinks back down into it to be passively effective. Passivity is always already penetrated by activity; this is what makes it possible for us to examine what is going on in passivity. For example, we can follow a chain of associations because there is already an order in play which our understanding can trace out retroactively. This order is 'not a blind and fundamentally senseless prefiguring coming from the outside; rather it is one that is accessible to ego-consciousness in form of knowledge'.⁴⁵

How does linguistic expression come about or, rather, where do experience and linguistic expression meet? 'The most original communication is interpretation and linguistic expression of that which I directly experience or have experienced.'⁴⁶ Here belong occasional expressions which Husserl has introduced in *Logical Investigations*. An occasional expression is an expression 'in whose case it is essential to orient actual meaning to the occasion, the speaker and the situation'.⁴⁷ An occasional expression becomes comprehensible only when the circumstances of the utterance are known to me. In contrast, objective expressions are not dependent on the situation; prime examples are mathematical theorems and other propositions of the theoretical sciences. As examples for occasional expressions Husserl offers personal pronouns like 'me' and demonstrative expressions like 'this' and 'here'. Yet it is possible, according to Husserl, to transform occasional expressions (which he also designates as subjective) into objective ones by adding the necessary determinations: I, Tanja Stachler, am writing right here, that is, on my couch in my flat in Hove, right now, that is, on 20 June 2013, this sentence. This closer determination is usually left out for practical reasons and due to clumsiness. Occasional expressions are normally comprehensible within the context of their occurrence, and who would constantly want to know every detail? Furthermore, the closer determination is 'not only impracticable, for reasons of complexity, but ... it cannot in the vast majority of cases, be carried out at all'.⁴⁸ This factual impracticability contrasts with the ideal possibility of such replacement.

In his analysis, Husserl is interested in situatedness; the sentence becomes increasingly true when I add further specific determinations. Yet upon closer examination, Husserl arrives at generality. As I add supplementary determinations, the sentence becomes more and more comprehensible, even for people in entirely different situations. Husserl thus also arrives at the difficulty and, ultimately, impossibility of expressing my immediate experience through language. I need closer and closer determinations to describe my own situation as well as my wishes and expectations, and this can obviously not be accomplished. Language brings to the fore that I always already find myself in a conversation with others. Yet language also shows that my immediate sense experience founds this conversation and can never entirely enter into it.

Husserl's analyses of passivity are richer than Hegel's reflections on the certainty of the senses; he devotes more attention to this fundamental region. At the moment when Hegel's reflections begin, the realm of sense-certainty proper has already been left behind as it was brought to linguistic expression. Neither Hegel nor Husserl truly considers the following question: Does language offer possibilities to minimize the violence done to the original, pre-objective qualitative states? In other words, can darkness, coldness, warmth, and so on be described in a way which does more justice to them than a sentence like 'Now is night'? This would be poetic language. Poetry is more capable of expressing sense experience as such rather than thematizing this area mainly in contrast to full-fledged perception, as phenomenologists like Heidegger and Levinas realize.

The move from the experience of qualitative states or object-like formations to the perception of objects is inevitable. The nature of time and our human nature as engaged in a conversation with others lead us to the next level. Nevertheless it is essential to keep in mind that there is a fundamental region in which we are not yet concerned with things and their properties.

NON-CONCEPTUAL CONTENT?

What Hegel calls sense-certainty and Husserl designates as passivity bears close relation to the discussion about non-conceptual content which is taking place in a different area of philosophy, outside of phenomenology, among Gareth Evans versus Wilfrid Sellars and John McDowell.⁴⁹ In closing, I would like to indicate how the problem differs, for phenomenology. Let me also indicate that, in Chapter 7, under the heading of intersubjectivity, we will encounter a similar problem where a more analytically inclined philosophy asks about the existence of other minds, whereas a phenomenology of the Other strives to describe how others appear to us. The problem of non-conceptual content is similar in that Sellars and McDowell contest the existence of non-conceptual content, whereas phenomenology leaves the question of existence open. Phenomenology argues that it makes sense for us to explore what, within the realm of appearances, is given to us in a more fundamental way than a fully-fledged object.

Yet phenomenology does not just take a more 'humble' approach of leaving the existence question open; it also demonstrates how the difficulties of examining this realm come about. Philosophy moves in the realm of language, and it cannot step outside of this medium. Yet entering the medium of language means having already left the level of pure sense experience. The discussion is thus located at the very threshold, where philosophy tries to describe what is going on in the more fundamental realm of sense experience.

It can conduct its discussion only in an indicative and sometimes indirect way because language brings us into the realm of perception where we deal with objects that we can identify and thematize with others.

But would the phenomenological claim that such a realm can be described, albeit with difficulty and indirectly, not mean that phenomenology argues, against Sellars and McDowell, that such a realm does exist? No, it still only means that phenomenology is asking a different question. Within the realm of appearances, it makes sense to distinguish different levels, layers or dimensions. Phenomenology sometimes characterizes their mode of being by saying that these levels can be distinguished, but not separated. While phenomenology thus does not answer the question of the existence of non-conceptual content, it claims that there is such a thing as non-conceptual or pre-linguistic content of appearances. By calling it 'pre-' – whether pre-conceptual, pre-linguistic and so on – phenomenology signifies that this layer is more fundamental. It is thus not a matter of temporal precedence, or occurring first, but a matter of 'moving down' to a more fundamental level, a level at which we are concerned with the kind of 'raw' experience that has not undergone conceptual organization and starts changing when conceptual organization does its work.

What can phenomenology contribute to this discussion, if the claim made earlier is correct that it is doing more than just suspending the question of existence? Phenomenology examines the different layers involved in our perception and conceptualization of it. If the discussion about non-conceptual content did not stay locked in a discussion about existence, it could take stock of the different findings, its own and phenomenology's, to find out more about the nature of language. In response to the counter-argument that animals (and children) might, through their non-conceptual perception, show that non-conceptual content does exist, McDowell draws on Gadamer and his distinction between an animal's environment and our being in possession of a world.⁵⁰ That is useful, but a lot more could be learned from the phenomenological concept of world. McDowell notes his surprise that Gadamer fails to mention the similarities between his own account and Marx's concept of labour or work (*Arbeit*).⁵¹ Such similarities indeed exist; yet if McDowell acknowledged the underlying links between Hegel and Marx around labour and between Husserl, Heidegger and Gadamer on world, it would be possible to give a bigger role to the phenomenological concept of world. Our engagement with world through language is quite diverse, indeed, and much more multilayered than McDowell makes it appear. When McDowell states that the most relevant function of language for him is to create a 'repository for tradition', then this certainly squares with the most developed and concrete form of language in an historical world. But what about the most basic roles of language, more fundamental even than 'Now is night', as in 'Oooh!' for being

cold, 'Aah!' for spotting a connection, 'Eh?' for observing a clash? This would be an attempt to give some linguistic expression to the basic mechanisms of passivity as described by Husserl: association, disappointment. In addition to different layers of communication, the phenomenological tradition could be useful for the concept of 'second nature' on which McDowell places weight without rooting it back in world. Hegel's 'second nature' (see Chapter 10) as well as phenomenological explorations of habits and the habit body would be useful supplements.

In order to attend to different layers or levels, attention needs to be given not just to world as shared context but to the dynamic development of that context. The layers need not only be distinguished but examined in their relation to one another. Distinguishing different layers is different from an argument about fineness of grain as those who argue for the existence of non-conceptual content try to do. The different layers which we have seen emerge in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 as we were moving 'up' and 'down' from perception stand in a dynamic relationship to each other, a genetic relationship that is not to be confused with temporal precedence but connotes a foundational relation in terms of 'conditions for the possibility of' as part of a transcendental project. They also allow thematizing differences between conscious, non-conscious and semi-conscious content. As Peter Poellner explains in a very helpful article, a phenomenological approach to the matter allows examining the otherwise evasive experience of depth that we distribute to the conscious self, or 'the sense that there is always more to our experienced selves than we can articulate at the time'.⁵² This points ahead to the way in which the core of consciousness, that is, consciousness as it is actually at work, always evades us, as we will see in Chapter 7.

But, first, a next stage of methodological considerations is needed. It is exactly the dynamics between layers, or the genesis of consciousness, that phenomenology allows us to investigate, against the 'static' discussions about conceptual and non-conceptual content. We need to understand the shapes through which something comes to be what it is (to speak with Hegel) or a genetic account (in Husserl's words), which takes us to the next chapter on phenomenological methodology.

NOTES

1. Plato, *Theaetetus*, in *Complete Works*, ed. J. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997).

2. If the expression 'object' is nevertheless to be found in Hegel's text as well as in this chapter, then this term does not designate an object like a thing, but an object in the wider sense, that is, an object of consciousness or that which is known. The

essential feature of natural consciousness, namely, to enact a strict separation between knowledge and that which is known, is particularly present in the realm of sense-certainty, as we will see.

3. Hegel, PhS, 58/82.

4. Ibid.

5. Karl-Heinz Volkman-Schluck, *Hegel. Die Vollendung der abendländischen Metaphysik* (Hegel. *The Completion of Western Metaphysics*), ed. Herbert Edelmann (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1998), 111.

6. However, 'here' and 'now' should not be conceived as two separate moments of the 'this', as Fink points out: 'There is no "now" that is not here, and no "here" that is not now' (Eugen Fink, *Hegel: Phänomenologische Interpretation der 'Phänomenologie des Geistes'* (Hegel: *Phenomenological Interpretation of the 'Phenomenology of Spirit'*) [Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1977], 69). When the 'now' is the night, we are always concerned with the night here and not with the night on the other side of the earth.

7. Hegel, PhS, 60/84.

8. Hegel, PhS, 60/85.

9. For example, Werner Becker, *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes: Eine Interpretation* (Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit: An Interpretation*) (Kohlhammer: Stuttgart, 1971), 24; Merold Westphal, *History and Truth in Hegel's Phenomenology*. 2nd Ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 93.

10. However, Hegel's description of sense-certainty has not only been criticized but also been praised. Heidegger designates Hegel's analysis as an 'interpretation of sensibility which is unequalled in the history of philosophy' (Martin Heidegger, *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes*, in *Freiburger Vorlesung Wintersemester 1930/31*, ed. Ingrid Görland. Gesamtausgabe, Vol. 32 (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1980), 76; English: *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988], 54). Fink comes to a similar conclusion: 'Without even treating the sense organs and the specific differences of the various senses, Hegel accomplishes a fantastic interpretation of sensibility' (Fink, *Hegel: Phänomenologische Interpretation*, 61). We may wonder whether Hegel's descriptions of sense-certainty are so enjoyable to read because they evoke a feeling of irretrievable homeliness.

11. Hegel, Enc. III, Sect. 420.

12. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. P. Guyer et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), A598/B626.

13. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A600/B628.

14. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A601/B629.

15. Hegel, PhS, 60/85.

16. Fink, *Hegel: Phänomenologische Interpretation*, 73.

17. Hegel, PhS, 88/63.

18. In this fashion, the result of the chapter on sense-certainty coincides with the result of the beginning of the *Science of Logic*: Being is becoming.

19. Husserl, Hua IX, 55.

20. Not all remembering is active (e.g. formation of types involves passive remembering), but there are various instances of active remembering (e.g. when I actively search for a lost object).

21. Husserl, Hua XI, 76/118.

22. Husserl, Hua XI, 83/126.

23. Husserl, EJ, 97/90.

24. This phenomenon is interesting since it reminds us that something which is crossed out enables us to see two things, the original and the new, revised version. For this reason, it is revealing to read a writer's manuscripts. In the age of computers, the usage of the 'Delete' key eliminates this possibility.

25. Husserl, Hua XI, 31/69.

26. However, the result is not a Hegelian synthesis, and new and old senses are not related like opposites within the Hegelian dialectic where one, if consequently thought through, already harbours the other within itself, and vice versa. The specific dynamics of dialectic is thus lacking.

27. See Edmund Husserl, Hua XI, 128: 'Mere form is admittedly only an abstraction, and thus from the very beginning the analysis of the intentionality of time-consciousness and its accomplishment is an analysis that works on [the level of] abstractions.' (Also: Edmund Husserl, Hua XI, appendix XII, 387: 'And in this way, the entire doctrine of time-consciousness is a product of conceptual idealization!')

28. For example, Edmund Husserl, Hua X, §§ 11, 12, 24; Hua XI, § 18; EJ, 122.

29. Husserl, EJ, 96.

30. For a detailed discussion of the basic principle of association, see Elmar Holenstein, *Phänomenologie der Assoziation. Zu Struktur und Funktion eines Grundprinzips der passiven Genesis bei E. Husserl* (*Phenomenology of Association. On the Structure and Function of the Basic Principle of Passive Genesis in E. Husserl*) (The Hague: Kluwer, 1972).

31. Husserl, Hua I, § 39.

32. For a detailed discussion of the connection between affectivity and attention, see Anthony J. Steinbock, 'Affection and Attention: On the Phenomenology of Becoming Aware', *The Phenomenology of Attention* (Special Edition of *Continental Philosophy Review*), 37, no. 1 (2004): 21–43.

33. Husserl, Hua X, 30.

34. Husserl, Hua XI, 370.

35. Ibid.

36. Husserl, Hua XI, 3/39.

37. Husserl, Hua XI, 110/155.

38. Husserl, Hua X, 56.

39. On the general topic of intersubjectivity, see Dan Zahavi, *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity. A Response to the Linguistic Pragmatic Critique*, trans. Elizabeth A. Behnke (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001) as well as Yamaguchi's work on passive synthesis and intersubjectivity: Isheru Yamaguchi, *Passive Synthesis und Intersubjektivität bei Edmund Husserl* (The Hague: Kluwer, 1982).

40. Husserl states: "'Object" in the complete and genuine sense is identical with itself and is originally constituted as the thematic object for an ego in identifying activity' (Husserl, Hua XXXI, 25/298).

41. For a detailed discussion of this shift, see Anthony J. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond. Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 211 f.

42. Husserl, LI II/1, 35 ff.

43. Husserl, Hua XV, 221.

44. Husserl, Hua XV, 220: 'Wir, die Subjekte der Welterfahrung, haben die endlos offene Welt nach ihren bekannten Wirklichkeiten und unbekannten Möglichkeiten je von uns aus, jeder von sich aus durch die Vermittlung der Anderen und letztlich ihrer *Mitteilungen*.'

45. Husserl, Hua XI, 215/267 f.

46. Husserl, Hua XV, 222.

47. Husserl, LI II/1, 81/218.

48. Husserl, LI II/1, 90/223.

49. See, especially, Gareth Evans, *The Varieties of Reference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982) versus John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

50. McDowell, *Mind and World*, 115. See also John McDowell, 'Précis of Mind and World', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, LVIII, no. 2 (1998): 367. According to Christopher Peacocke, the issue of animals is the most important argument against McDowell's position (Christopher Peacocke, 'Does Perception Have a Nonconceptual Content?', *Journal of Philosophy*, 98 [2001]: 239–264).

51. McDowell, *Mind and World*, 117.

52. Peter Poellner, 'Non-Conceptual Content, Experience, and the Self', *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 10 (2003): 56.

Chapter 5

Phenomenological Method II – From Stasis to Genesis

The child is also a human being, yet it has only the disposition, the actual possibility of reason.

Hegel, Lectures on the History of Philosophy, 39

Hegel has taught us that we know something only when we are familiar with its development; this holds true especially for philosophy. Philosophy is historical because Spirit necessarily comes to appearance in time and realizes itself in it; this is what Hegel asks us to try understanding. An aid can be found in the ‘history’ of the individual which, in certain ways, reflects history at large, that is, history in the genuine sense. Before we turn to history, in Chapter 8, we will thus reflect on genesis. The temporal character of consciousness is also the motivating force behind Husserl’s turn to genetic phenomenology. In his careful investigation of consciousness, he realizes that the temporality or development of consciousness needs to be considered. This realization takes him increasingly closer to Hegel. Husserl calls his genetic phenomenology ‘explanatory’ because, in contrast to the merely ‘descriptive’ approach of static phenomenology, it allows us to see how something has emerged as what it is. This approach is thus a crucial tool in the search for origins that we are attempting in this study. Yet for history proper, we will need to include intersubjectivity more fully, as Chapter 7 will show.

HEGEL AND THE GENESIS OF SPIRIT

Hegel maintains that we know a matter or object better if we know and understand how it came about, that is, when we are familiar with its genesis. A first example which Hegel uses in the ‘Preface’ to the *Phenomenology* is

that of the mathematical proof: A person who knows Euclid's theorems by heart without knowing their proofs is not considered a geometer.¹ Put more generally, this means that we know a matter or object better if we know and understand how it came about, that is, when we are familiar with its genesis. According to Hegel, this holds for philosophy even more than for mathematics. The mathematical proof is an 'activity external to the matter in hand (*Sache*)'² and concerns merely the relation to the thinker, whereas in philosophy, the result cannot be detached from the process which has brought it about. The nature of philosophical truths does not allow 'that the true consists in a proposition which is a fixed result, or which is immediately known', or else, it is 'dogmatism as a way of thinking'.³

Further examples which serve to elucidate Hegel's concept of development (which he essentially adopts from Aristotle) concern the development of plants and humans. Hegel wants to explain why it is no contradiction that the 'idea has to first become what it is'.⁴ What is called development here can be understood only if two 'states' are distinguished: the state of 'disposition' (*Anlage*), 'being-in-itself' (*dýnamis*), on the one hand, and that of 'actuality', 'being-for-itself' (*enérgeia*), on the other.⁵ What the plant is actually and for itself is in itself already present in the seed of the plant. Two further characteristics come to the fore in this example, and they hold 'writ large' also for the development of Spirit. First, the seed 'wants' to develop; that is, it has the tendency to break out and realize itself in the plant and finally in the fruit. The seed 'returns to itself' in the sense that the plant was already in itself present in the seed. Second, the in-itself 'governs' the development such that the plant does not get lost 'in mere unregulated change'.⁶ The development is not chaotic and unregulated; we can see in it the development towards a goal. Something analogous holds for the human being: 'The child is also a human being, yet it has only the disposition, the actual possibility of reason.'⁷

It is an essential insight of Hegel's philosophy that self-consciousness is not a static unity but a 'movement'.⁸ The chapter on self-consciousness in which this movement is developed in detail has received more attention than any other chapter of the *Phenomenology* and has exerted the strongest influence on other philosophers. These influences cannot be discussed here, nor will it be possible to treat self-consciousness in its depth and breadth. For our purposes, it will suffice to see how self-consciousness, as it steps outside itself and returns to itself (and necessarily so), performs a movement which Spirit then both imitates and continues.

Self-consciousness, as treated by Hegel, does not coincide with our common understanding of self-consciousness. For Hegel, consciousness already knows about the possibility of reflection through which I can become aware of myself perceiving or remembering an object; even sense-certainty distinguishes between the 'I' and the 'this'. All these forms of consciousness

pertaining to the 'I' are characterized by the fact that the 'I' is opposed to the object. The 'I' is the place of knowledge, as it were, in contrast to the object as known. Yet self-consciousness, as we now get to know it, is characterized by the fact that it recognizes itself in the object or that it recognizes how the object exists only as related to it. In this sense, self-consciousness constitutes the turning point of *Phenomenology* as it marks the entry into the 'native realm of truth'. Self-consciousness is hence not present from the beginning, but, rather, it is the 'sublation of a self-alienation' or the 'countermovement to a forgetfulness enveloping us'.⁹

For a summary of the movement of self-consciousness and a preview of its further development, the brief presentation of self-consciousness in Hegel's *Encyclopaedia* is instructive. The first level is 'individual self-consciousness' as immediate, related to the external object; it is self-consciousness in the mode of desire. On the second level, self-consciousness relates to another self-consciousness, and the process of recognition takes place; here, 'a unification of *individuality* and *universality* begins'. Third, there is the formation of 'universal self-consciousness' in which the otherness of the two selves is sublated.¹⁰ Recognition finds its completion only in the universal self-consciousness, which is Spirit¹¹ – but this universal self-consciousness makes up only the concept of Spirit, not Spirit which has come to itself. In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel states quite appropriately that what is missing and what will come to determine the further pathway of consciousness is the 'experience of *what* Spirit is'.¹² Spirit is defined here in a helpful, yet preliminary and incomplete, fashion as the unity of different self-consciousness(es) which exist for themselves. Spirit can thus also be designated as 'universal consciousness' (*Gesamtbewusstsein*).¹³

Spirit undergoes a movement which continues from the process of self-consciousness. We will see how the movement of Spirit shares essential features with the process of self-consciousness, repeating the experience of self-consciousness on a higher level, as it were. When Hegel emphasizes that the true should be grasped not only as substance but also as subject,¹⁴ he attributes a kind of reflecting movement to Spirit. Hegel describes the 'reflection in otherness within itself'.¹⁵ In the chapter on absolute knowing, he states that the movement of Spirit consists in Spirit externalizing itself and sublating this externalization.¹⁶ Spirit is thus also a return from otherness and has to become external to itself in order to be able to come back to itself on a higher level. One might wonder how and into what element Spirit is supposed to externalize itself, given that Spirit is the true and the whole. Yet self-consciousness also did not find itself in an entity different from itself (despite some initial failed attempts with objective being) but in another self-consciousness. Spirit externalizes itself in order to finally realize that everything is Spirit. The movement of Spirit consists in recognizing and grasping itself – and grasping

(*begreifen*) means being joined with oneself in otherness.¹⁷ Spirit's *Bildung* or education means having to traverse the world of self-alienated Spirit.¹⁸

The movement of Spirit can also be described in terms of the relation between consciousness and self-consciousness: Spirit is the 'reconciliation' of consciousness and self-consciousness.¹⁹ In its first occurrence, self-consciousness is abstract and has to undergo a process of *enrichment*; it 'enriches itself till it has wrested from consciousness the entirety of substance'.²⁰ During the course of the *Phenomenology*, the entire world (as given to consciousness) is traversed and appropriated by consciousness in such a way that consciousness penetrates the world and recognizes itself in it. Hegel also describes this process in terms of 'work' (*Arbeit*): Spirit exists (in the full sense) only 'after the completion of its work', which is 'to equate its *self-consciousness* with its *consciousness*'.²¹ The notion of work refers us back to the work of the servant in the chapter on self-consciousness. As the servant forms the objective world and thus finds himself or herself in it, Spirit forms nature and comes to find itself in nature. This work brings about 'actual history'.²²

The connection between Spirit and time is summarized by Hegel in the following, rather dense, statement.

Time is the concept itself that is there and which presents itself to consciousness as empty intuition; for this reason, Spirit necessarily appears in time just so long as it has not grasped its pure concept, that is, has not annulled time.²³

Science is concerned with the concept through which Spirit comes to conceive itself. The existence of this concept coincides with time: It is necessarily movement, development, becoming. Philosophy has to follow the development of the concept; rather than making its own contribution, it follows this movement.²⁴ Spirit forms itself, that is, it externalizes itself and must be understood as the return to self *from* such externalization; however, this holds only until Spirit has grasped itself completely and thus 'annulled' time. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, we are concerned with Spirit as externalized and appearing, and hence with Spirit as moving in time, bringing about history.²⁵ We will consider later on (Chapter 9) what it might mean that history is sublated when Spirit returns to itself.

How do Spirit and thus also consciousness (as Spirit in its appearance) move? We find out what moves them, namely, the absolute negativity of the concept.²⁶ In the *Phenomenology*, negativity is described as the moving force.²⁷ The negative first emerges as the difference between consciousness and an external object, and this difference 'can be regarded as the *lack* (*Mangel*) of both'.²⁸ Knowledge is missing its object since the object is external to it and cannot be fully absorbed. Missing from the object, on the other hand,

is the subject or, more precisely, being a subject; this is what the object cannot bring about by itself. This difference is indeed the moving force behind consciousness since consciousness tries to sublimate the difference through negation. Negation motivates the progression, effecting that the movement does not stop (until Spirit has come to itself and has sublated all differences, all negativity). The movement is possible due to the way in which negation is essentially determined negation, as mentioned before.

For Hegel, it is self-evident that the result of the negation contains within itself that from which it resulted; otherwise, the expression ‘result’ (*Resultat*) would not be appropriate.²⁹ ‘Because the result, the negation, is a specific negation it has a content’; it contains the original concept and its negation and is thus ‘the unity of itself and its opposite’.³⁰ Sense-certainty can serve as an example: When we point to what is now, it has already been. The ‘now’ turns into the ‘now which has been’ and thus into ‘not-now’. But rather than being left with nothing at all, we have come to the flowing ‘now’ as the unity of ‘now’ and ‘not-now’, that is, becoming. As we have seen earlier, even a simple ‘is’ thus already points to a history of becoming that has led up to it.

HUSSERL AND THE GENESIS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In a manuscript from 1921, Husserl describes the methodological distinctions between static and genetic phenomenology:

In a certain way, we can therefore distinguish ‘explanatory’ phenomenology as a phenomenology of regulated genesis, and ‘descriptive’ phenomenology as a phenomenology of the possible, essential shapes (no matter how they have come to pass) in pure consciousness... . In my lectures, I did not say ‘descriptive’, but rather ‘static’ phenomenology.³¹

Genetic phenomenology is characterized here as ‘explanatory’ phenomenology, in contrast to static phenomenology which is merely ‘descriptive’. Explanation here does not primarily point to the question concerning ‘why’, but, rather, concerning ‘how’ a certain phenomenon has come about. This question is based on the idea that specific laws or regulated structures can be discerned in the genesis of consciousness; genetic phenomenology is the attempt to find these laws. Such a quest must not be conflated with a developmental history of consciousness as it is investigated by developmental psychology. Yet, in a different way, the history of consciousness’s development is indeed at stake, provided we are able to understand these concepts in a new and literal fashion. It is an essential insight of Husserl’s analysis of perception that we always perceive in contexts. These contexts are not just the horizons

or referential contexts in which we encounter an object but also contexts on the side of consciousness. We have already seen similar or perhaps very different objects, and we relate what we currently perceive to that which we have perceived earlier, that is, our perceptual acquisitions.

Every perceptual act is historical³² – hence Husserl’s talk of a “‘history’ of consciousness”.³³ There is good reason for Husserl to place ‘history’ in quotation marks, since we are not yet dealing with history in the genuine sense which has to include intersubjectivity, even in the intergenerational sense. What genetic phenomenology takes into consideration, in contrast to static phenomenology, is the temporality of consciousness. Temporality is understood here in the concrete sense which includes all the contents of time-consciousness. Husserl states in *Ideas I* that time is ‘a name for a completely delimited sphere of problems and one of exceptional difficulty’ which we can ‘leave out of account ... in our preliminary analyses’ without endangering the ‘rigor’ (*Strenge*) of the analyses.³⁴ Nevertheless, Husserl mentions time-consciousness briefly at this point, in terms of the original impression (*Urimpression*), retention and protention. Yet in his later investigations, he realizes more and more that time cannot be left out and that it is not sufficient to examine its structures in an abstract way. The reflection on the essential structures of time is itself still static. Objects stand in a relation of simultaneity or succession with one another, but ‘what gives unity to the particular object with respect to content ... – the analysis of time cannot tell us, for it abstracts precisely from content’.³⁵ The syntheses of time-consciousness are indeed the most basic syntheses of passivity, but as such they are also the most abstract and empty ones. In order for objects to be constituted, the laws of modalization, fulfilment, disappointment and association need to be in play, as Husserl discusses them in the *Analyses Concerning Passive and Active Synthesis*.

The fundamental structures of passive synthesis form the basis of all egoic activity. Yet this does not mean that all genesis is passive; Husserl distinguishes between active and passive genesis where active genesis encompasses ‘all the works of *practical reason*, in a maximally broad sense’.³⁶ ‘Practical’ is understood here in such a wide fashion that it encompasses achievements of logic and mathematics. Accomplishments of active genesis concern the constitution of new objects in the widest sense – including ‘ideal’ objects – which are formed on the basis of already existent objects. Husserl calls such accomplishments ‘primordial institutions’ (*Urstiftungen*).³⁷ Primordial institutions emerge from a community which shares a common history, language or culture. Therefore, Husserl describes the accomplishments of active genesis as achievements of ‘sociality’ which needs to be determined more closely.³⁸

The creations of active genesis become sedimented in the ego. Once habitualized, we can always return to them. The accomplishments of active

reason flow into passivity, and, in this sense, Husserl is justified in claiming that passive genesis partly precedes activity – in and through the laws of inner time-consciousness, association and so on – partly involves activity.³⁹ Active and passive genesis can be distinguished but not separated. Without the occurrences of passive synthesis, there would be no active accomplishments. The results of active genesis, in turn, flow back into the passive realm; passivity is always already interspersed with activity. The prefiguration of passive synthesis is ‘not a blind and fundamentally senseless prefiguring coming from the outside; rather, it is one that is accessible to ego-consciousness in the form of knowledge’.⁴⁰ To give a simple example for association: I can often reflectively trace back which idea has inspired an idea that is presently in my mind by way of a certain similarity.

At the same time, habitualization does not imply that we would be aware of such sedimentations. Husserl purposefully treats such occurrences under the heading of passivity, and where he examines association and reproductive awakening, he states: ‘I do not need to say that the entirety of these observations that we are undertaking can also be given the famed title of the “unconscious” (*Unbewußten*).’ And immediately afterwards, he states explicitly: ‘Thus, our considerations concern a phenomenology of the so-called unconscious.’⁴¹ Husserl wants to elucidate the laws which govern this ‘so-called unconscious’;⁴² the stream of consciousness does not come about as a mere ‘series’ (*Nacheinander*) but as a ‘development’ (*Auseinander*), ‘a process of becoming according to laws of necessary succession’.⁴³ If the stream of consciousness were a mere succession of arbitrary experiences, the undertaking of genetic phenomenology would be non-sensical. There are certain features which the ‘history’ of consciousness shares with history in the genuine sense as conceived by Husserl: In both cases, the progression is goal-directed, we have certain expectations, and our experiences are connected in a lawful or ordered fashion (e.g. through laws of association).

The analyses of genetic phenomenology concern not the ego in the abstract sense (such as the structures of consciousness which emerge when we try to abstract from all content), but the concrete, temporalizing ego. In examining the genesis of egoic consciousness, the ego as individualized and different from others comes into view and is designated by the concept of the monad: ‘Finally, we have reached the phenomenology of monadic individuality, including the phenomenology of a connecting genesis in which the unity of the monad emerges and in which the monad exists through the process of becoming.’⁴⁴ Concerning the monad, Husserl also mentions the ‘heritage (*Erbe*) of the past’ and the ‘unity ... of its past’;⁴⁵ but even a community of monads does not yet have a history in the strict sense. Although the community of monads is intersubjective, the framework of Husserl’s genetic phenomenology ultimately only allows for a community of contemporaries,

that is, of contemporary monads. This is due to the fact that his analysis in *V. Cartesian Meditation* is based on empathy and does not include linguistic communication. Empathy presupposes that the bodies of others are given in the flesh; it can thus not involve past and future generations. In *V. Cartesian Meditation*, Husserl states explicitly that in his examination, 'the above-indicated generative problems of birth and death and the generative nexus of psychophysical being have not yet been touched'.⁴⁶ Only this higher dimension, the dimension of generative phenomenology,⁴⁷ does allow for history in the genuine sense.

The history of the individual is less complex than history in the genuine sense; it can serve as an explanatory and illustrative device since it stands in close connection to generative history. If we want to understand who we are, we need to understand ourselves in our historicity. Even the original Greek imperative of the Delphic oracle, 'Know thyself!', ultimately points to the need of understanding our communal history. To be sure, this holds only if history is understood teleologically rather than as an arbitrary succession of events; this is a conviction which Hegel and Husserl share, as we will see.⁴⁸

REALISTIC IDEALISM: TWO VERSIONS

Hegel's method is an absolute idealism, Husserl's a transcendental idealism. This means, roughly, that Hegel aims to describe the experience of the absolute or Spirit, whereas Husserl follows the experience of transcendental consciousness. Nonetheless, there projects are closely related since Spirit, in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, is first encountered by us as consciousness, whereas Husserl realizes in the course of his philosophizing that consciousness is nothing but the other side of the lifeworld or historical world. Importantly, both Hegel and Husserl are involved in a description of experience which they designate as phenomenology. Most importantly, in both cases, their idealism has realistic elements or wants to explore the things as they present themselves.

Hegel's method in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is descriptive-phenomenological, not dialectical.⁴⁹ Consciousness undergoes a dialectical experience which we consider phenomenologically. It is our task to attend to and follow the development of our object. Such attending marks the difference between the phenomenologist in Hegel's sense and a completely uninvolved analyst who eliminates all life in the analysed object. When we follow Hegel, our object is not dead, but engaged in a living dialectical development. The fact that we experience consciousness as dialectical is connected to the essential role of language. Consciousness is dialogue – a dialogue between natural and philosophical consciousness and thus a

dialogue between two voices which contradict each other and challenge the other side to question its standpoint.

Hegel's philosophy is an idealism, but also a realism. More precisely, his idealism is an epistemological realism, as Kenneth R. Westphal has shown in subtle analyses which cannot be considered in detail here.⁵⁰ The concept in Hegel's sense, for example, is not situated outside of this world but consists only in the connection between objects and its features in the world.⁵¹ There is no in-itself which transcends the appearances; the object of cognition is the world itself. Consciousness is the actuality, and the actuality is consciousness – this implication not only determines reality (in the sense of an idealism) but also consciousness (in the sense of a realism). Hegel explains in the 'Introduction' to his *Phenomenology* that the examination consists in checking whether the concept corresponds to the object or whether the object corresponds to the concept.⁵² The first of these two directions has traditionally been proposed by realists, the other by idealists; Hegel shows that both come down to the same.⁵³

On the level of absolute knowing, idealism and realism prove identical and all loose ends are tied up, as it were. Only absolute knowing does know about its emergence and know itself to be the result of a process. How does absolute knowing emerge from religious consciousness? Religion already has the Absolute as its content, but in the wrong 'form', that is, in the wrong way. Religion pictures the Absolute or presents it to itself (*vorstellen*), whereas philosophy grasps (*begreifen*) it. Religion's main lack is the form of its knowing, that is, the way in which it grasps its object. It presents the Absolute to itself, and presentation implies separation. This separation needs to be surpassed. The separation of consciousness and its object is common to all incomplete shapes of consciousness. In religion, the essential contrastive terms are presentation versus concept and feeling versus intuition (*Anschauung*).⁵⁴

God, who has turned himself in his universality into the individual and finite, dies – but then the dying individual takes on the character of universality again as Christ is resurrected.⁵⁵ And yet, we know about this process as God's and not our own; our knowledge about these events is a divine gift, stemming from an alien source.⁵⁶ This is reflected in that form of Christian consciousness which comes closest to the Absolute: feeling (which is the feeling of opposites becoming unified in the resurrection). However, feeling is unmediated closeness, and it is the way of conceiving in which we are most receptive.

Feeling is evoked by an other, alien from me. The content of religious consciousness thus calls for overcoming the form of presentation and feeling in order for this content to come to its right – in absolute knowing. The appropriate form has already appeared; the form was exhibited by the 'beautiful soul' as the last level within the section 'C. Spirit that is certain of itself. Morality'.

What is needed for overcoming religious consciousness is the transition from object-oriented consciousness to self-consciousness, albeit on the highest level. Intrinsic to the beautiful soul is the 'simple unity of the concept',⁵⁷ it has the form of absolute knowing, yet not the content. Consciousness wants to be free, independent from all content which would mean an alien determination. However, such self-determination can in the end only mean an empty circling in itself. Starting as absolute freedom, it turns out to be poverty which sinks into itself. Consciousness 'is submerged in this concept of itself',⁵⁸ and the completed form of self-certainty is of no use if it cannot be united with its content. The beautiful soul 'wastes itself in yearning'.⁵⁹

As the form of the beautiful soul and the content of revealed religion become united, we arrive at absolute knowing. Religious consciousness realizes that the Absolute is not to be sought in the beyond; instead, it attempts to know the Absolute in a fashion that would be certain of the Absolute as itself. The Absolute is not separated from us, but knows itself in and through us. How does absolute knowing grasp Spirit? How can the coinciding of consciousness and object which was announced in the beginning be made plausible without being dissolved into an undifferentiated identity?

Those who expect the last chapter of the *Phenomenology* to provide a convincing and self-evident proof for Hegel's thesis regarding the coincidence of object and concept will be disappointed. Essentially, Hegel believes that we have in the meantime learned about this coincidence. This is indeed just the consequence of his procedure: If it were possible to explain absolute knowing in one single step, then the entire pathway of consciousness up to this point would have been superfluous decoration. Rather, we had to realize for each single shape that the separation of the two sides could not be maintained. Everything else would be a merely logical deduction of the coincidence which is not the concern of *Phenomenology*. Hegel wants us to realize concretely why, say, perception cannot be understood if the emphasis is placed entirely on the object or entirely on perceiving. And even though the modern era, as an historical epoch, is designated by the separation of subjectivity and objectivity as the essential shape of its diremption, it is not sufficient to contemplate this opposition; rather, we have to understand how it came to be.

In this sense, our task in reading this last chapter might consist less in explaining the coincidence than in showing how this coincidence does not mean a collapse into indifference. We thus have to consider that we are still dealing with two sides, that is, with subject and substance. In the 'Preface', Hegel utters his famous proposition in which claims, opposing Spinoza, that 'everything turns on grasping and expressing the true, not only as *substance*, but equally as *subject*'.⁶⁰ While Spinoza, in his doctrine of the substance, certainly went some way towards the truth, he failed to notice that the substance has to be conceived as in itself animated or as subject.⁶¹ Substance, for

Hegel, is inert reality or persistent being, broadly speaking. In this substance, as pure and spiritless, there are no distinctions.⁶² It is the substance's fault that Spirit can only move slowly as 'the self has to penetrate and digest this entire wealth of its substance'.⁶³

The subject is the self or self-consciousness which penetrates, integrates and thereby animates the substance. Hegel designates this penetration of the substance by the subject as transformation of the 'in itself' into the 'for itself'⁶⁴ which once again points to the process of integrating and relating. Endemic to the side of the subject is the power of making distinctions; the subject makes distinctions or uncovers the distinctions hidden in the substance. At the beginning of the chapter on Spirit, the relation is described as follows: 'As *substance*, Spirit is unshaken righteous self-identity; but as *being-for-self* it is a fragmented being, self-sacrificing and benevolent.'⁶⁵ The subject is in charge, so to speak, of liquefying the substance and bringing it into motion. Yet in the end, both sides have to make concessions; reconciliation means that both parties need to give up their one-sidedness. The subject as 'being-in-itself-in-its-singularity' abandons its being-for-itself; it 'disowns itself, makes a confession'; the substance in its abstract universality slowly gets rid of its inflexibility and immobility.⁶⁶ Substance and self mutually complete each other, and, in this way, Spirit enters into its true being.

The subject 'externalizes' itself 'into' the substance, and self-consciousness posits itself as object – and is thus aware of the object's non-independence. The concept of externalization plays a crucial role for the entire final chapter; it is complemented and completed by recollection or internalization (*Er-innerung*) in which the subject goes back into itself, yet takes the substance along with it, turning it into its content. Internalization signifies that the subject returns into itself, wanting to discover its entire nature, yet it can do so only if it knows its substance which it therefore preserves inside itself.⁶⁷ Internalization is thereby 'the higher form of the substance',⁶⁸ or, more precisely, the substance as internalized is the higher form of the substance. Although internalization has to be understood as literally as possible, in terms of a movement of turning outwards and turning inwards, occurring between subject and substance, it can still be helpful to also bear in mind the everyday concept of *Erinnerung* as recollection. Everyday recollection appears subjective and immaterial, yet there is no recollection which would not harbour some of the world's density to which it always remains tied.

The reconciliation of subject and substance is Spirit. Absolute knowing is accordingly 'Spirit that knows itself in the shape of Spirit or as *comprehensive knowing* (das *begreifende Wissen*)'⁶⁹ where comprehension means being-for-itself in the other. Spirit manages to stay self-same in its externalization.⁷⁰ Spirit externalizes itself into the extension of the substance, and it internalizes itself into the depth of the subject; neither in the extension nor in the depth

does it lose itself. This does not mean casting 'the differences back into the abyss of the Absolute', but, rather, 'knowing is this seeming inactivity which merely contemplates how that which is differentiated spontaneously moves in its own self and returns into its unity'.⁷¹

Oppositions do not lose their opposed character but only achieve their full nature as oppositions in and through the connective unity. As subject and substance become reconciled, Spirit in and for itself comes to appearance. Gaining a concept of itself, Spirit unfolds in the conceptual realm and thus in a scientific fashion. Yet how is Spirit related to consciousness, given that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* deals also (and according to its original title, perhaps even predominantly) with the experience of consciousness? Consciousness is Spirit in the form of its immediate existence or, in the words of the *Encyclopedia*, consciousness is 'only the *appearance* of Spirit';⁷² therefore, we are dealing here with a 'phenomenology' of Spirit. The qualification, 'only', indicates that appearance is something flawed or provisional. Indeed, essence and appearance are sublated in actuality (and thus certainly also preserved); 'higher than mere appearance is, in the first place, *actuality* (*Wirklichkeit*)'.⁷³ At the same time, Hegel acknowledges the significance of the appearance in a sentence which moves him closer to Husserl, despite all his statements to the effect that appearances are one-sided:

Appearance, in any case, is a very important stage of the logical idea, and it may be said that philosophy distinguishes itself from ordinary consciousness by regarding what counts for the latter as having being and independence as mere appearance.⁷⁴

In the last chapter of *Phenomenology*, Hegel also emphasizes the necessity of the 'passage (*Übergang*) of the concept into *consciousness*'⁷⁵ as the place where Spirit comes to appear. Just as phenomenology has led us towards absolute knowing, the latter now leads us back to the experience of consciousness.

In the *Phenomenology*, we are not dealing with cognition as 'pure comprehension (*Begreifen*) of the object' – that would be the content of *Logic* – but with cognition as becoming or as shapes of consciousness.⁷⁶ Opposed to the shape of consciousness as a mere moment of a totality is the totality as a whole, not split up into moments. The *Logic* is concerned with this totality or with the 'spiritual essentiality (*geistigen Wesenheit*)'.⁷⁷ Does this mean that the *Logic* is exclusively concerned with the whole and never with its moments? How might the totality as totality be conceived? The *Logic* is indeed also concerned with moments, yet in such a way that the whole is present in each moment. In the initial stages of the *Phenomenology*, we are concerned with the moments as such, and the philosophical consciousness

has to stand back, even though it already knows how matters will develop. The moments which occur in the *Logic*, by contrast, are not shapes of consciousness any longer, but ‘specific concepts’ in their ‘self-grounded movement’.⁷⁸ Furthermore, Hegel states that the moment ‘does not appear as this movement’ in science but ‘solely in its pure determination’.⁷⁹ The impression might arise that the *Logic* is concerned with static concepts, whereas the *Phenomenology* deals with dynamic concepts, but Hegel would not be content with static concepts. The concepts of the *Logic* also move, but they move in relation to each other rather than in themselves.

At the same time, Hegel does not leave any doubts about the fact that Spirit needs to first come to completion in itself, as world Spirit, before completing itself as self-conscious Spirit.⁸⁰ A specific, definite order is outlined here. At the beginning of the section on Spirit, Hegel provides a helpful explanation which is valid for the *Phenomenology* as a whole. All previous shapes of consciousness which have been dealt with prior to the chapter on Spirit are ‘abstract forms of it’, namely, of Spirit, and ‘isolating of those moments presupposes Spirit itself and subsists therein’.⁸¹ Spirit is the concrete whole, and the shapes of consciousness are abstractions from this whole.⁸² In Aristotelian terms, Spirit is the *proteron te physei*, the first by nature, which precedes and grounds the shapes. Yet from our perspective, matters look differently; the *proteron pros hemas* is the most immediate shape, sense-certainty.

As long as Spirit is divided into its moments, it has not yet reached its substance and is not yet in itself absolute knowing. This difference which is sublated in the course of the pathway is *time*.⁸³ Spirit necessarily appears in time until it has grasped its pure concept, that is, annuls time.⁸⁴ Yet the fact that the differences are not eliminated in absolute knowing but, rather, come into their true essence, indicates already that the annulment of time cannot mean its straightforward elimination. We will return to this topic in Chapter 8; first, realistic idealism in Husserl will be outlined.

Husserl himself designates his philosophy as a transcendental idealism.⁸⁵ However, he repeatedly points out that we will not get closer to understanding an idealism in the phenomenological sense if we contrast it with a realism: ‘This idealism is not a product of sportive argumentations, a prize to be won in the dialectical contest with “realisms”’.⁸⁶ If transcendental-phenomenological idealism were the ‘opposite’ of a realism, then it would not be dependent only on the latter, but the sense of this idealism would be dependent on the specific shape of realism which would be the point of departure for the discussion and contrast. Husserl does not want to enter into such confrontations since he considers them unfruitful.⁸⁷

It follows from the very development of transcendental phenomenology that it is an idealism. Husserlian idealism is not to be understood by contrasting it with other philosophies but, rather, ‘the proof of this idealism

is ... phenomenology itself'.⁸⁸ Transcendental idealism does not contest the existence of the world; in the *epoché*, it leaves it the question open as to whether the world has a being that is independent of its being for us. Essential for Husserl's idealism are the ideas of correlation and constitution: World and consciousness are correlatively linked to each other, and consciousness constitutes the world. This means that consciousness gives meaning, but not existence to the world, as has been repeatedly emphasized.⁸⁹

An idealism understood in this fashion can then even be designated as a realism, albeit not a realism in the traditional sense. From Husserl's perspective, traditional realism would be nothing but an attempt to turn the natural attitude's assumption of the independence of the world into a philosophy. Such an attempt can only fail; the natural attitude is precisely not philosophical since it does not question its implicit presuppositions. However, Husserl's phenomenology is a realism in the literal sense. Husserl even states: 'There can be no stronger realism than this, if by this word nothing more is meant than: "I am certain of being a human being who lives in this world, etc., and I doubt it not in the least"'.⁹⁰ If both realism and idealism are understood literally, then Husserl's philosophy is a realistic idealism or an idealistic realism; it goes back to the things (Latin: *res*) themselves and questions them regarding their essence (Greek: *idea*, *eidōs*).

Methodological considerations sometimes lead to generalizations, and they tend to lose touch with the 'things' or matters in question. Husserl's method is always connected to the examined phenomena; when he turns to different phenomena, he also takes up a different method or develops a new methodology, provided the phenomena require this. However, the explicit formulation of a new method does not always coincide with the turn to new phenomena. Husserl discusses the difference between static and genetic method only after he has already extensively employed the genetic method, and an historical method is found mostly in its employment, not in independent methodological considerations.

Husserl thus does not always explicate his methods; he does not always develop them 'systematically'. But what would does 'systematic development' even mean? A method has to follow the phenomena in question; the phenomena determine the method. Husserl would agree with Hegel's considerations in the 'Introduction' to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*: It is impossible or, rather, leads to irresolvable contradictions to clarify epistemological questions before the process of cognition even begins. The systematic explication of a method can happen only after the fact, that is, after its employment.⁹¹ A systematic explication is indeed Husserl's goal, and he would like to develop his philosophy into a system.⁹² Yet such a system is not really developed; this seems to be caused not simply by the fact that Husserl lacked sufficient time to formulate it, but even more so by the way in which Husserl, in looking back, always

also looks ahead. When he wants to reflect on ‘his system’, as it were, he is simultaneously concerned with new analyses, new phenomena and new methodological developments. The failure to work out his system thus confirms to the open character of Husserl’s phenomenology, his ‘working philosophy’.

What Husserl actually wanted to accomplish in developing a system was a thorough critique of his philosophy, a ‘critique of critique’. Even though such a ‘metacritique’ has never been worked out, Husserl’s entire phenomenology is characterized by an emphasis on critique, and this also includes continuous self-critique – albeit not in any final, systematic form. The comprehensive and thorough critique accomplished by Husserl’s philosophy concerns not only our cognitive possibilities and abilities; it is not merely a theoretical but a ‘practical’ critique.

NOTES

1. Hegel, PhS, 42/24.
2. Ibid.
3. Hegel, PhS, 41/23.
4. Hegel, HiPhi I, 39.
5. Ibid.
6. Hegel, HiPhi I, 40 f.
7. Hegel, HiPhi I, 39.
8. Hegel, PhS, 138/105. Manfred Riedel explains that this is ‘the decisive step beyond Kant and the entire previous philosophy’ (Manfred Riedel, ‘Fortschritt und Dialektik in Hegels Geschichtsphilosophie’ (‘Progress and Dialectics in Hegel’s Philosophy of History’), in *Hegel in der Sicht der neueren Forschung (Hegel: New Research Perspectives)*, ed. I. Fetscher [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973], 400).
9. Eugen Fink, *Hegel: Phänomenologische Interpretation der ‘Phänomenologie des Geistes’* (*Phenomenological Interpretation of the ‘Phenomenology of Spirit’*) (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1977), 169.
10. Hegel, Enc. III, § 425 Zusatz.
11. Ludwig Siep points out rightfully that the movement of recognition finds its completion not in the chapter on self-consciousness, but in Spirit as a communal self-consciousness which becomes manifest in institutions (Ludwig Siep, ‘Die Bewegung des Anerkennens in der *Phänomenologie des Geistes*’ (‘The Movement of Recognising in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*’), in *G.W.F. Hegel – Phänomenologie des Geistes (G.W.F. Hegel – Phenomenology of Spirit)*, O. Pöggeler et al. (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1998), 112.
12. Hegel, PhS, 145/110, my emphasis.
13. This is Manfred Riedel’s term in an explanation of the structure of self-consciousness: “‘Spirit’ is the dialectical unfolding of this structure into the universal consciousness (*Gesamtbewusstsein*) which Hegel employs in order to explain the social-historical world and its changes’ (Riedel, ‘Fortschritt und Dialektik in Hegels Geschichtsphilosophie’).
14. Hegel, PhS, 23/10.

15. Ibid.
16. Hegel, PhS, 587 f./490 f.
17. Hegel, PhS, 583/486.
18. Hegel, PhS, 577/481.
19. Hegel, PhS, 579/482.
20. Hegel, PhS, 584/487.
21. Hegel, PhS, 584/486.
22. Hegel, PhS, 586/488.
23. Hegel, PhS, 584/487.
24. Hegel, PhS, 51/31.
25. Hegel, Enc. III, § 549.
26. Hegel, Enc. I, § 381 f.
27. Hegel, PhS, 26/12.
28. Hegel, PhS, 39/21.
29. Hegel, ScL I, 49/54.
30. Ibid.

31. Husserl, Hua XI, 340/629.

32. Antonio F. Aguirre, *Genetische Phänomenologie und Reduktion. Zur Letztbegründung der Wissenschaft aus der radikalen Skepsis im Denken E. Husserls (Genetic Phenomenology and Reduction. On the Ultimate Foundation of Science from Radical Scepticism in E. Husserl's Thought)* (The Hague: Kluwer, 1970), 156.

33. Husserl, Hua XI, 339/627.

34. Husserl, Hua III, § 81.

35. Husserl, Hua XI, 128/174.

36. Husserl, Hua I, 111/77.

37. Husserl, Hua I, 113/80.

38. Husserl, Hua I, 111/77.

39. Husserl, Hua I, 113/79.

40. Husserl, Hua XI, 215/267 f.

41. Husserl, Hua XI, 154/201.

42. It would be a separate task to examine how Husserl's genetic phenomenology relates to psychoanalysis which also emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century.

43. Husserl, Hua XI, 339/628.

44. Husserl, Hua XIV, 38. The similarities and differences between this notion and Leibniz's concept of the monad cannot be considered here.

45. Husserl, Hua XIV, 36.

46. Husserl, Hua I, 169/142.

47. Anthony J. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995) as well as Chapter 6 of this book.

48. See Chapter 9.

49. See Kenley R. Dove, 'Hegel's Phenomenological Method', in *New Studies in Hegel's Philosophy*, ed. W. Steinkraus (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 34–56. For a discussion of Hegel's phenomenological method, see also Robert B. Pip-pin, 'Hegel's Phenomenological Criticism', *Man and World*, 8 (1975): 296–314.

50. Kenneth R. Westphal, *Hegel's Epistemological Realism* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989).

51. Westphal, *Hegel's Epistemological Realism*, 144.

52. Hegel, PhS, 77/54.

53. Dove, 'Hegel's Phenomenological Method'.

54. Hegel, PhS, 574 f./478 f.

55. See Hegel, PhS, 565 f./471: 'For, in this movement, it manifests itself as *Spirit*; abstract essence is alienated from itself, it has natural existence and self-like actuality; this its otherness, or its sensuous presence, is taken back again by the second othering and posited as superseded, as *universal*. ... This death is therefore its resurrection as *Spirit*.'

56. See Mitchell H. Miller, 'The Attainment of the Absolute Standpoint in Hegel's Phenomenology', in *The Phenomenology of Spirit Reader – Critical and Interpretative Essays*, ed. J. Stewart (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 429.

57. Hegel, PhS, 580/483.

58. Hegel, PhS, 482/399.

59. Hegel, PhS, 491/407. The philosophical and literary origins of the 'beautiful soul' are discussed in H.S. Harris, *Hegel's Ladder* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 479–482.

60. Hegel, PhS, 22 f./10.

61. Hegel, HiPhi III, 166.

62. Hegel, PhS, 587/489.

63. Hegel, PhS, 590/492.

64. Hegel, PhS, 585/488.

65. Hegel, PhS, 325/264.

66. Hegel, PhS, 582/485.

67. Hegel, PhS, 590/492.

68. Hegel, PhS, 591/492.

69. Hegel, PhS, 582/485.

70. Hegel, PhS, 588/490.

71. Hegel, PhS, 588/490.

72. Hegel, Enc. III, § 414.

73. Hegel, Enc. I, 263/200.

74. Hegel, Enc. I, 262/200.

75. Hegel, PhS, 589/491.

76. Hegel, PhS, 576/480.

77. Ibid.

78. Hegel, PhS, 589/491.

79. Ibid.

80. Hegel, PhS, 585/490.

81. Hegel, PhS, 325/264.

82. Because of this connection between consciousness and Spirit, I disagree with William Maker who claims that it is the task of *Phenomenology* to show that 'consciousness ... comes to eliminate itself' (William Maker, *Philosophy without Foundations: Rethinking Hegel* [Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994], 88). Already on a first level, sublation has a more complex meaning than mere elimination. However,

Maker's claim that the task of *Phenomenology* is a negative one provides a helpful supplement to other interpretations which focus more on the positive goals of PhS.

83. Hegel, PhS, 587/489.

84. Hegel, PhS, 584/487.

85. For example, Husserl, Hua I, §§ 41, 49, 52; Hua V, 150 ff.

86. Husserl, Hua I, 118/86.

87. See also Husserl's 'Postscript to *Ideas I*': 'I must not forget here to state explicitly that I do not intend to retract anything with respect to transcendental phenomenological idealism, that I still consider every shape of the usual philosophical realism as contradictory in principle (*prinzipiell widersinnig*), yet not less so all idealism which argumentatively position themselves opposite to this realism by "refuting" it' (Husserl, Hua V, 150 f.).

88. Husserl, Hua I, 119/86.

89. Husserl, Hua V, 152 f.

90. Husserl, Hua VI, 190 f./187.

91. See also Hua VI, 158/156: 'In the beginning is the deed. It makes the still insecure project more definite and at the same time clearer and clearer by means of samples of successful execution. After this, reflection on method is required (as the second step).'

92. This intention of Husserl is discussed by Sebastian Luft, 'Dialectics of the Absolute. The Systematics of the Phenomenological System in Husserl's Last Period', *Philosophy Today* (1999): 107–114.

Chapter 6

Motivating the Turn towards History

We have not yet left Plato. Will we ever leave him?

Derrida, *Rogues*, 137¹

How do we enter into philosophy? Husserl describes the transition to philosophy as an act of our free will, yet, in his later works, he asks how this act could be motivated. One such motivation for turning to philosophy can be found in the experience of a crisis in the natural sciences that inspires historical reflections. Such reflections lead to wonder as the original motivation for philosophy in ancient Greece, wonder that can also be a form of crisis, but not the same as that occasioned by the current crisis of sciences. In contrast, it might seem as if there is no problem of motivation in Hegel's philosophy since he analyses a contradictoriness within natural consciousness that leads into philosophy as a way to solve these contradictions. However, Hegel is also aware of the fact that for natural consciousness philosophy first seems an unnecessary form of violence. Moreover, Hegel explicitly discusses crisis as a possible motivation for philosophy, especially political crises in ancient Greece, which he depicts as ruptures between inner thought and outer reality.

In this chapter, I will show how Hegel and Husserl come to similar conclusions concerning possible motivations for philosophy as they both turn to the historical beginning of philosophy in ancient Greece, yet their insights into possible motivations to philosophize also have implications if a beginning should be possible for us. For both of them, it is essential that natural consciousness turns away from individual beings at which his everyday interest is directed and opens up to the whole instead. The fact that they both discuss crisis as a motivation for philosophy calls for an investigation of the common structure of crisis but also of differences between the different shapes of crisis that are diagnosed by Hegel and Husserl. According to Husserl, the encounter

with alien people and nations can call our familiar beliefs into question, thus moving us to wonder. For Hegel, freedom plays an essential role, and this concerns freedom of thought as well as political freedom. A situation in which the external conditions do not allow for a full realization of freedom might exactly lead consciousness to discover the 'realm of thought'.

MOVING FORCES IN HEGEL

Whereas Husserl poses the question of a motivation for philosophizing and goes to some trouble to find an answer, Hegel's philosophy might first give the impression that there is no problem of motivation at all. Hegel discovers a contradictoriness, a restlessness within natural consciousness that may remain latent for a while, but is just waiting, as it were, for an opportunity to come forth. It is, therefore, not surprising that in the Preface and Introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel is more concerned with asking what reasons there might be for natural consciousness *not* to philosophize or to stop at a given place on the path than with asking what motivates natural consciousness to philosophize.

But it is important to note that Hegel also recognizes how the contradictoriness of consciousness usually, and for the most part, remains hidden; he says that philosophical thinking means a 'violence' to natural consciousness – a violence that is 'seemingly without necessity.'² From the perspective of natural consciousness, it is unnecessary to take up this unfamiliar way of thinking. Why bother? Usually, an outer impulse is required in order for natural consciousness to discover its insufficiency. Such impulse might be a question that philosophical consciousness poses to natural consciousness, so that both enter into a dialogue. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is an expression of this dialogue. Concretely, the relation between these two forms of consciousness can be described as a teacher-student relation; Hegel was, indeed, quite engaged in pedagogical concerns.³ However, there was a time when there were not yet any philosophy teachers. So how did philosophy first come about? In a fashion similar to Husserl, Hegel goes back to the ancient Greeks and investigates the conditions of philosophy's beginning.

We have already seen that, for Hegel, negativity is the driving force behind the movement of Spirit. Negativity first becomes manifest in the difference between consciousness and its object. Rather than leading to an impasse or blockage, negativity inspires progression, for the negation of a given contradictory standpoint is a determinate negation. The nothingness evolving out of negation is not a pure nothingness but a determinate nothingness: It is the nothingness of that from which it results and hence has a content. In recognizing that the nothingness resulting from negation is determined by what is

negated as well as preserved and elevated in it, a new shape of consciousness has arisen.

The movement continues until the coincidence of consciousness, and its object has been realized such that the force of negativity has come to rest; this finally happens only in absolute knowing. Hegel says: '[S]hort of it no satisfaction is to be found at any of the stations on the way.'⁴ Hegel admits that natural consciousness on its own is not capable of going beyond itself but that it is 'driven beyond it by something else',⁵ yet this other ultimately belongs to consciousness itself, even if natural consciousness does not recognize this: 'Thus consciousness suffers this violence at its own hands', for consciousness is 'explicitly the concept of itself'.⁶ It lies in the essence of consciousness to compare its concept with its object, and if it finds that concept and object do not coincide, it is forced to rethink its approach and move on to the next shape. Consciousness cannot accept contradictions, because its task is to relate, compare and modify its concept.

Nevertheless, natural consciousness may become afraid of its self-imposed violence. Hegel discusses three reasons why natural consciousness might stay on a given level or not even enter into the pathway in the first place: inertia, sentimentality and vanity. Inertia is the thoughtlessness that does not want to be troubled by thought. Sentimentality finds everything 'good in its kind',⁷ thus avoiding contradictions by embracing a complete relativism. Vanity, finally, refuses to accept anything that is not its own, and, at the end, it even has to reject its own thoughts (since a thought by definition always includes something that is not just its own: It is the thought *of* something). Those who, in one of these fashions, ignore everything that is alien to them cannot experience the restlessness of beginning.

Hegel is not blind to the fact that most people are, indeed, rather indifferent to philosophy. The cause for this is not just that such people are inert, sentimental and/or vain; while this might be the case, there are further reasons, namely, reasons which are to be found in the essential features of natural consciousness and which make the transition to philosophical thought difficult. Even though he does not say so explicitly, it seems that Hegel ultimately agrees with the observation that Fink emphasizes in regard to Husserl's phenomenology: As long as natural consciousness is still completely immersed in itself, there is no need for it to leave its position behind; natural consciousness is consistent in itself, and it is satisfied. Hegel says, for example, that the individual has the right to demand that science hand him the 'ladder' to science's standpoint.⁸ This image implies that natural consciousness is lacking the means to reach the standpoint of science; it watches science from below, as it were, but does not know how to make the leap, and even less so, why it should do so. Accepting the standpoint of science means a 'violence it is expected to do to itself, all unprepared and seemingly without necessity'.⁹

This statement certainly alludes to Plato's allegory of the cave in which those who become untied need to be forced to turn around and leave the cave, and once they are outside, they need to bear the pains caused by the sunlight which they are not used to.¹⁰

Passages like the one just cited convey the impression that it is not misplaced to conceive of the relation between philosophical and natural consciousness as analogous to the relation between teacher and student, especially since Hegel himself speaks of 'pedagogical progression' (*pädagogischen Fortschreiten*).¹¹ This analogy certainly helps illustrate how natural consciousness, indeed, needs to receive an impulse in order to enter the pathway to philosophy. Yet it is not quite clear what character the pedagogical process has. If natural consciousness is in itself contradictory, which can be shown by simply asking him a suitable question, and it is furthermore has the appropriate medium for progress at its disposal, namely, the principle of determinate negation, it seems that the role of the philosophical 'teacher' is limited to asking the 'students' a question here and there, thus motivating them to think for themselves or on their own feet. Ideally, this would, indeed, be the case – and the dialogue in *Phenomenology* between natural and philosophical consciousness is in its essence such an 'ideal' dialogue. However, due to his various experiences, Hegel knows the pedagogical reality like few other philosophers, and he is aware that natural consciousness as it 'actually occurs' has left the state of innocence, so to speak, because set opinions and prejudices have already blocked the way for pure thought and observation. It is interesting that Hegel explicitly praises the 'spirit of youth' which has 'not yet been caught up in the system of the limited ends of necessity (*beschränkte Zwecke der Not*)' and is also 'yet unperturbed by the negative spirit of vanity'.¹²

If natural consciousness usually receives an outer impulse – for example, as a question posed by philosophical consciousness or by those who are already familiar with philosophy – the problem arises as to how philosophy could first emerge. The first and original beginning occurred for Hegel as for Husserl in the ancient Greek world. By turning back to the Greek origin, we expect to gain insight into conditions that are favourable for philosophizing. Such insights may also help us to understand better how beginnings in philosophy can be possible for us today.

Hegel undertakes such inquiries in his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. Since he claims that philosophy is essentially historical such that the history of philosophy and world history are intertwined, he has to take seriously the question concerning philosophy's historical beginning. Hegel does not simply presuppose that philosophy began in ancient Greece, but he examines what philosophy is in order to then find out where and when such a form of thought has occurred for the first time. However, it is not possible to give an

account of philosophy's content beforehand since philosophy does not reflect on an underlying substratum.¹³ Yet if one wants to give a preliminary answer as to what philosophy is about (an answer that only gains its concretion in being developed further), it could be said that philosophy deals with thought, with the universal which is all being.¹⁴ Thus, philosophy and its history begin where existence is grasped as the universal (or vice versa) or where thinking about thought emerges. Thinking about the universal and about the whole of being requires that we are no longer directed towards singular beings and bound to them; thought must liberate itself from nature, from being immersed in matter, and must become free thinking. When statements are made about the whole of being, like 'The principle of things is water', philosophy begins. Where did this freedom of thinking first occur? Hegel's answer is: 'Philosophy first begins in the Greek world. ... It is in the West that this freedom of self-consciousness first comes forth, natural consciousness goes down into itself and Spirit comes to itself.'¹⁵

These sentences invoke the concept that is essential for Hegel's reflections on the beginning of philosophy: freedom. Freedom, which is the presupposition for philosophy, has many facets. Freedom of thought means that Spirit has to liberate itself from its natural condition of being immersed in matter.¹⁶ Natural consciousness is not free since it is attached to matter and strives to realize itself in particular beings. Such natural striving can never be really satisfied since it incorporates its object into itself and then wants more, never coming to rest. The practical dimension of freedom is political freedom, which was likewise blooming in ancient Greece – yet in a restricted form and with a limitation, since slavery was still existent.¹⁷ The insight into the freedom of all human beings had not yet been completed; nevertheless, there were significant achievements in the thought and manifestation of political freedom, and such achievements justify the talk of a beginning of political freedom.

As with Husserl, Hegel also thinks that it was not at all an arbitrary occurrence for philosophy to arise in ancient Greece. There are outer conditions that favour and enable philosophy. The necessary condition, so Hegel says with reference to Aristotle, is the satisfaction of the everyday needs to the point that it is possible to think about general matters.¹⁸ Moreover, Hegel thinks that the experience of crisis can serve as an impulse for philosophy. When a rupture has come about between 'inner striving and outer reality', it may happen that Spirit forms a 'realm of thought'.¹⁹ The crisis which goes along with such a rupture takes natural consciousness out of its satisfied immersion in the sensible world. The attitude of taking things for granted has to be ruptured in order for thought to begin. Socrates and Plato found themselves in a state of crisis: a crisis of Athen's political situation, which was declining. From a Hegelian perspective, the emergence of philosophy

in ancient Greece can thus be explained through the dissonance between a newly arising sense of freedom on the one hand and a political state of decline on the other. The crisis is exactly this experience of dissonance, and it calls for philosophical reflection.

THE ORIGIN OF PHILOSOPHY IN WONDER

This section will first examine the thesis that wonder, evoked by an encounter with the alien, might constitute the beginning of philosophy. Some features of the relation between homeworld and alienworld will be discussed; this theme has a wider significance since it sheds a new light on the problem of intersubjectivity. Afterwards, possible objections against the previously mentioned thesis will be examined, such as Eugen Fink's criticism, stating that philosophy can and has to emerge from a disturbance within the homeworld. I will give a response to this objection from a Husserlian perspective. The final part attends to the connection between crisis and wonder as well as primordial institution and final institution.

The issue of motivation is complicated because it is essential that the *epoché* cannot have a motive in the sense of a cause but only in the sense of an impulse to which we respond. Natural consciousness does not have a reason to go beyond itself but is complete or self-sufficient. Eugen Fink states explicitly: 'It belongs to the essence of the natural attitude that it is *closed off* against the dimension of the "transcendental", its entanglement in the world.'²⁰ Yet if the *epoché* was a mere act of the will, entirely unmotivated, it would have a certain arbitrariness. This would be different if it could be shown that philosophy responds to a certain lifeworld experience, namely, the experience of a mood or *pathos* which overcomes us and is not a matter of our will.

In his historical reflections, Husserl examines the primordial institution (*Urstiftung*) of philosophy and science in ancient Greece. In his Vienna lecture, a text prior to the *Crisis*, Husserl refers back to Plato and Aristotle, who regarded wonder, *thaumazein*, as the origin of philosophy.²¹ According to Husserl, the significance of wonder is that it is an entirely unpractical, 'theoretical attitude'. It remains questionable, however, whether it is justified to characterize wonder as an 'attitude', for it seems that Husserl usually refers to attitudes as that which we take up out of free will. Wonder, on the other hand, is a *pathos*, something we are overcome by, something not at our disposal. Husserl takes this into consideration insofar as he talks about the 'passion of a world-view and world-knowledge'²² – yet one might still ask whether Husserl underestimates the significance of moods in the emergence of philosophy.²³ It is all the more noteworthy that Husserl attributes to a mood the special role of motivating us to philosophize, thus making philosophy possible.

Why is it that philosophy originated in ancient Greece? What distinguishes the situation of the ancient Greeks from that of other peoples and other times? Husserl investigates the *de facto* motivation for the emergence of philosophy and asserts that everything subject to the generation of meaning has its factual motivation 'in the concrete framework of historical occurrence'.²⁴ Husserl's descriptions become more illustrative than usual, particularly when he considers the role the Greeks had as a trading nation. What is important about these historical considerations is his claim that the encounter with the alien, with alien nations, led to the institution of philosophy. According to Husserl, in the encounter with alien nations an essential distinction comes to forefront: On the one hand, there are different conceptions, interpretations and mythologies, and, on the other hand, there is a core of identity which relates to all these conceptions and which remains identically the same throughout. 'It is the same sun, the same moon, the same earth, the same sea, etc. that are so differently mythologized by the different peoples according to their particular traditionality.'²⁵ Philosophy originates from such experiences and sets out to search for Being as such, for a stable sense of truth, for the identical being-in-itself in contrast to the various subjective ways of grasping it. This aim already evokes natural sciences' tendency towards a radical objectivism that forgets its origins in subjectivity.

The difference between one's own nation and alien nations thus brings to the fore the difference between relative ways of givenness and a non-relative core. Husserl calls alienness a 'fundamental category of all historicity'.²⁶ The difference between home and alien thus has to be understood as an historical one.

The special feature of an alien object is that it is not only an object unfamiliar and incomprehensible to us but an object that seems to belong to a context alien to us. The alien object seems to have a meaning that is unfamiliar to us but familiar to other people; it points to other objects that are also more or less alien to us. An alien tool is still recognized by us as a kind of tool that supposedly fulfils a certain function, for example, is not a work of art and so on. It belongs to an alien world. The rupture of the accustomed by the alien, in other words, makes it clear that all beings in general appear in contexts, in horizons, that is, that they belong to a coherent world.

The world familiar to us, the world in which we are at home in the broadest sense of the term, is what Husserl calls homeworld (*Heimwelt*). It is a world historically generated and steadily becoming; the homeworld can be grasped only in an historical approach, as a process which encompasses our ancestors and descendants and is thus generative. Our homeworld has developed its 'historical face', its 'cultural face' over time, and the same holds for the alienworld.²⁷ Since I have not participated in the history of the alienworld and have not grown into its happenings, this world presents confronts my

understanding with obstacles.²⁸ Homeworld and alienworld undergo modifications; my homeworld can become bigger, and I can become at home in the alienworld. Yet the contrast between home and alien as such is never eliminated; rather, it belongs to the structure of every world.²⁹ The relationship of homeworld and alienworld is by necessity asymmetrical, for I can never integrate the alienworld into the homeworld. It should not be our goal to achieve an encompassing synthesis or to integrate the alien into the home (or the home into the alien) but, rather, to respond to the alien from the perspective of the home.³⁰ All other approaches mean a violation of the limits between homeworld and alienworld.³¹ Respecting these limits means that the points of view of home and alien are not interchangeable. I always have to start from the home when I encounter the alien; this starting point cannot be surpassed.³²

After these preliminary reflections on homeworld and alienworld, we shall now return to Husserl's thesis that it is the encounter with the alien which might inspire philosophy by revealing the differences between home and alien conceptions. Husserl immediately answers the obvious objection: Why is it in the encounter with the alien that this distinction first arises? Is it not already in the intersubjective interchange of individual persons within our own nation that we get to know differences of diverging conceptions which refer to the one and same object? Husserl replies that while these differences belong to the 'long familiar form of everydayness in which normal practical life takes place',³³ the normality they reflect is ruptured in an encounter with the alien.³⁴

What is this special feature of the relation between familiar and alien objects, and what distinguishes it from the relation between normality and abnormality? Normality is an historical phenomenon as well;³⁵ it is formed and modified in the homeworld over generations. Yet there are also anomalies within our homeworld: They are encompassed by and integrated into the homeworld as mere deviations. The abnormal is measured against the normal and thus traced back to it. But with regard to the alien, the typicality of the homeworld that prefigures what is abnormal within it fails.³⁶ The alien cannot be integrated into our world; the alienworld is something unique and unpredictable. Therefore, the encounter with the alienworld can inspire us to wonder.

However, in his draft for an introduction to phenomenology, Eugen Fink criticizes the idea that the encounter with the alien could be a motivation for philosophy. According to Fink, there are motives occurring in everyday life which lead us to the problem of the world: Experiences like limit-situations, confrontations with death and transience all make the world uncanny and questionable.³⁷ 'The unfamiliarity arising from such a disturbance – from the basic experience awakening philosophy – thus is not an intrusion of the alien into the narrow circle of the familiarity of the homeworld, but concerns the

homeworld itself.’³⁸ Fink’s objection is certainly correct in that it is, indeed, the homeworld itself that has to be put into question in order for us to be moved to philosophise. The experience of something alien as merely unfamiliar always enables us to fall back on the homeworld in which everything is safe and familiar. However, when the alien is truly experienced as such, it is encountered in an alienworld, and this alienworld simultaneously calls our entire homeworld into question. Our perceptions and our conceptions are complemented by alien perceptions and conceptions; our homeworld is constituted and transformed in and through the encounter with an alienworld.

Fink’s claim that our own homeworld has to become questionable is compatible with Husserl’s idea of an encounter with the alienworld if we take Husserl’s concept of homeworld and alienworld in its proper sense and consider its consequences. For wonder in the face of an alienworld does not come to rest in the alienworld. The fact that there are alienworlds makes us aware of our home context in a significantly different way from how we experience it in everyday life, and, at the same time, this homeworld is put into question by the existence of alien homeworlds. The relativity of our home conceptions becomes apparent, and their taken-for-grantedness is ruptured. Along with the possibility of radically questioning these concepts, the possibility for a critique and renewal of the homeworld comes to the fore.³⁹

If our actual experience is that of a crisis and of distress, as Husserl explains in his late philosophy, and yet the historical investigation leads to wonder as the beginning of philosophy, the question of how these two belong together emerges. For history is not a linear movement, but, as Husserl points out, philosophy’s ‘primordial institution’ and ‘final institution’ (*Endstiftung*) belong together; philosophy is properly carried out if its task has been brought to full clarity and has thus arrived at its origin.⁴⁰ Philosophy’s *telos* is primordially instituted in the beginning as that which is to be realized in the end. The end is thus already established in the beginning, and the beginning, on the other hand, reaches itself only in the end. Beginning and end essentially belong together.

Does this mean that the beginning of philosophy is wonder whereas the end is designated by crisis? We need to consider that wonder in the face of the alien is also an experience of crisis, albeit in a different sense. Through an encounter with the alien, our familiar experiences are radically called into question. However, the crisis which characterizes our current situation has an essentially different character. We experience a crisis as the sciences cannot provide answers to our most essential questions. This crisis is invoked by the groundlessness of modern objectivism.

Our experience of crisis is the experience of a failure in philosophy and the sciences. They were unable to fulfil the sense given to them in their primordial institution. According to Husserl, this sense is still effective for us

nowadays, although in an historically modified shape; we experience crisis in relation to that which we originally meant to achieve. Therefore, historical reflections are crucial if we want to know who we are and how to begin anew in the midst of the current crisis. However, this reflection must not be limited to a discovery and (modified) repetition of the primordially instituted sense; rather, this sense needs to be examined and questioned. The current crisis, Husserl argues, occurred because philosophy and the sciences were unable to do justice to their original sense. Yet this failure is not contingent; it goes back to an ambiguity inherent in the primordially instituted sense. In the quest for an identical being-in-itself in contrast to the relative modes of appearance, modern objectivism and the resulting forgetfulness of the subject are already prefigured. A new examination of the primordially instituted sense would thus have to return to the distinction between modes of givenness and irrelative core and attempt not to focus in a one-sided fashion on the irrelative core. Turning to the modes of givenness is, indeed, the task of Husserlian phenomenology.

For Husserl, transcendental phenomenology corresponds to the ideal of a universal, presuppositionless science. Given the insights of Husserl's late philosophy, however, presuppositionlessness can no longer mean a radically new beginning, but instead following the primordially instituted sense that was handed down to us, and a sense that means not taking over anything without calling it into question.

In this way, the experience of a crisis can inspire us to wonder. Yet wonder which evokes a beginning for philosophy cannot come to rest in a single being; in wonder, the context itself is put into question: Wonder is ultimately wonder in the face of a world. *Pathos* thus plays an important role in the motivation to do philosophy; philosophy is not a matter of free choice – it is not our disposal. This is not to say that the motivation to do philosophy is a forced one; rather, an experience or a mood moves us to turn towards philosophy. But the most important point is how we respond to wonder, how we take it up for ourselves – or, as Fink puts it: 'The emergence of the philosophical problem out of wonder is no passive occurrence, but only becomes real in our free engagement in the astonishment, in enduring wonder and carrying it out – in other words, if we succeed in transforming the occurrence into a spontaneous projection of the problem.'⁴¹

If asked whether philosophy emerges from a mood or from an act of free will, Husserl thus responds in his late philosophy that it is a mood which inspires us. The fact that Husserl nevertheless still presents the *epoché* as a matter of free will is not simply a relict from his early philosophy, but an expression of the insight that a mood overcomes us, yet we still respond to it. Wonder thus does not automatically lead us into philosophy, as it were; it is still our task to philosophically respond to wonder.

WONDER OR CRISIS?

Hegel and Husserl thus agree that philosophy can be brought about through experiences of crisis. However, we need to look more closely. At first glance, an important difference seems to be that Husserl does not describe the situation in ancient Greece as crisis, but, rather, the current state of Europe, whereas Hegel diagnoses a crisis in Athens, yet regards the situation of Prussia during his times as a state of completion and perfection. But it would be a hasty conclusion to attribute to Husserl the standpoint of a history of decline, to Hegel the view of a history of progress. For Husserl, the current crisis has already been prepared for in the ancient primordial institution of philosophy: It is rooted in the one-sided concentration on an independent being-in-itself of objects.

Furthermore, we have seen that there are very different forms of crisis. Even though Husserl does not talk of a crisis in relation to the ancient beginning of philosophy, the encounter with the alien and the resulting critique of our familiar conceptions could also be described as a crisis – a crisis which has to be distinguished from the current crisis.⁴² The current crisis concerns natural sciences in their core. Because of the increasing significance of the sciences, such a crisis is particularly precarious. Of what kind was the ancient crisis that Hegel diagnoses? It seems to be neither a questioning of the homeworld by the alienworld nor an internal crisis of the sciences (which had only just emerged in Greece at the time). Instead, Hegel is concerned with a rupture between the world of thought and outer reality, a rupture that became most manifest in the problematic political situation of Athens in the fifth century BCE. Such a crisis is a crisis within the homeworld, as it were.

On an alternative interpretation, the problematic political situation of the Greeks might not be altogether independent of the encounter with alienworlds. There are indications that the political problems of the Greeks were connected to their existence as a trading nation. Such a connection would account not only for the wars that co-determine the political situation but also, in the area of philosophy, for the awakened interest in different constitutions. In other words, the fact that the Greeks became aware that different nations have different constitutions such that their own constitution cannot be taken for granted contributes to the experience of crisis and rupture between inner thought and reality. This leads to reflections on the best possible constitution, even if only that of a utopia. According to this reading, the experience of crisis to which Hegel attested would still not be identical with that discussed by Husserl, yet it would be related to the wonder that so struck the latter.

Both Hegel and Husserl are aware that the beginning of philosophy is not independent of historical conditions. Experiences of crisis favour the emergence of philosophy. A crisis means in any case that our taking things

for granted is ruptured, our conceptions are radically called into question. In political crises (such as Hegel finds them in ancient Greece) just as in crises of the sciences (as Husserl discusses them in his late work), our inner ideas, wishes and desires clash with the manifest reality, whether it is a reality determined by wars or by technology.

In sum, Hegel and Husserl share the view that the question of a motivation to undertake philosophy is an important one and that the experience of crisis can provide an answer to this question. Crises can take different shapes, but they all have certain features in common: There is always a rupture of our familiar experiences, and this rupture takes the form of a *pathos* that overcomes us rather than being in our power. Moreover, it would be possible to interpret all crises in terms of an encounter with the alien, if we understand alienness in a sense broad enough to include technology.⁴³ Despite these similarities in structure, different crises cannot be collapsed into one. If historicity is taken seriously, it is obvious that the wonder which led to the institution of philosophy in the first place is not the same as the current scientific crisis diagnosed by Husserl; at the same time, they are essentially connected to each other, and the latter is prepared for in the Greek act of institution. If philosophy had not turned away from appearances to focus on the core or essence, the sciences that emerged along with it would have a different shape today. Similarly, Hegel can only describe the current situation as a completion of philosophy and as a state of Spirit realizing itself in light of the beginning of philosophy considered as a rupture between thought and reality, that is, as Spirit alienated from itself.

Yet even though experiences of crises make it more likely for philosophical thought to arise, there is never a reliable causal connection. Both Hegel and Husserl acknowledge the tendency of natural consciousness to retain its standpoint. An impulse from the outside may be helpful, but it never provides a guarantee that we shall enter into philosophy. Only after the fact, in looking back, does it really become obvious that a transition to philosophy has taken place.

NOTES

1. Jacques Derrida, *Rogues: Two Essays on Reason*, trans. M. Naas et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005).

2. Hegel, PhS, 30/15.

3. In his function as a high school teacher, school rector and later on professor, Hegel gave an important advice concerning the Prussian reform of the educational system.

4. Hegel, PhS, 74/51.

5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Hegel, PhS, 75/52.
8. Hegel, PhS, 29/14.
9. Hegel, PhS, 30/15.
10. Plato, *Republic*, trans. G. Grube, in *Complete Works*, ed. J. Cooper (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 515c.
11. Hegel, PhS, 32/16. Maurer suggests that 'the philosophical, absolute knowing is the master, and naïve consciousness which is immediately convinced by that which it counts as reality is the student' (Reinhart Klemens Maurer, *Hegel und das Ende der Geschichte (Hegel and the End of History)* [Freiburg & München: Alber, 1980], 42).
12. Hegel, 'Antrittsvorlesung [Inaugural Lecture] in Berlin, 22.10.1818', in *Idee und Wirklichkeit einer Universität. Dokumente zur Geschichte der Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin (Idea and Reality of a University. Documents from the History of Friedrich-Wilhelm University of Berlin)*, ed. W. Weischedel (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1960), 314.
13. Hegel, HiPhi I, 111/90.
14. Hegel, HiPhi I, 115/94.
15. Hegel, HiPhi I, 117/96 ff.
16. Hegel, HiPhi I, 117/96.
17. Hegel, HiPhi I, 122/100.
18. Hegel, HiPhi I, 70/50.
19. Hegel, HiPhi I, 71/51.
20. Eugen Fink, *Studien zur Phänomenologie 1930–1939 (Studies in Phenomenology 1930–39)* (The Hague: Kluwer, 1966), 111. See also p. 110: 'The fact that the phenomenological reduction is unmotivated (i.e., that it does not have any worldly problem as its true motivation) is also an expression of the peculiar "unfamiliarity" of the reduction.'
21. Husserl, Hua VI, 331/285.
22. Husserl, Hua VI, 331/285.
23. Heidegger endeavours to correct this oversight.
24. Ibid.
25. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 387.
26. Husserl, Hua VI, 320/275.
27. Husserl, Hua XV, 233 fn. 1.
28. Manuscript A VII 9, 2b: 'Verstehen des Chinesen – Verstehen seiner Heimwelt. Ich müßte in sie wie ein Kind in die Welt des Erwachsenen 'hineinwachsen', schließlich seine Geschichte verstehen lernen', cited in Anthony J. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 311 fn. 13.
29. Husserl, Hua XV, 431.
30. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond*, 185.
31. Bernhard Waldenfels, *Der Stachel des Fremden* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1991), 38 f.
32. Husserl, Hua XV, 624.
33. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 388.
34. Husserl dilutes this claim when he admits that his argument is partly based on the actual coincidence that philosophy emerged in Greece while the Greeks, as

a trading nation, encountered the alien: 'Gewiß, wären inner-nationale Relativitäten über den einzelnen praktischen Fall hinaus allgemein auffällig geworden, so wäre auch bei diesen derselbe angezeigte Unterschied von identischem Kern und verschiedenen Auffassungsweisen vorgetreten - auf den es hier ankommt. Ich halte mich an das bei einer Welthandelsnation wie der griechischen Nächstliegende' 'To be sure, if inner-national relativities would have become obvious beyond an individual practical case, then here as well the difference between identical core and different modes of conception would have come to the fore - the difference that is at stake here. I just keep to what seems most likely for a world trading nation like the Greeks' (Husserl, Hua XXIX, 388). Yet there are substantial rather than historically contingent grounds for Husserl's thesis, as I wish to show here.

35. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond*, 188 f.

36. Held Klaus, 'Heimwelt, Fremdwelt, die eine Welt', in *Phänomenologische Forschungen*, Vol. 24/25: *Perspektiven und Probleme der Husserlschen Phänomenologie* Freiburg: (Alber, 1991), 310.

37. Eugen Fink, *VI. Cartesianische Meditation. Teil 2: Ergänzungsband* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1988), 30.

38. Fink, *VI. Cartesianische Meditation*, 33.

39. Edmund Husserl, 'Fünf Aufsätze über Erneuerung' ('Five Essays on Renewal') which comprise, Hua XXVII. See Chapter 10.

40. Husserl, Hua VI, 73/69.

41. Eugen Fink, *Nähe und Distanz* (Freiburg: Alber, 1976), 69.

42. Martin Heidegger takes up the question of a connection between the 'first beginning' and the 'other beginning' in terms of fundamental moods: According to Heidegger, wonder is the fundamental mood belonging to the Greek beginning of philosophy, the first beginning, but not the fundamental mood of our present world. If a beginning should be possible for us today, then the corresponding fundamental mood of this 'other beginning' might be startled dismay (*Erschrecken*), reservedness (*Verhaltenheit*) or awe (*Scheu*). As soon as we fixate this mood with just one term, we are misled. The question of the first and the other beginning cannot be taken up here; let it suffice to say that although Heidegger does not conceive of wonder as the fundamental mood of our time, it is essentially connected to the fundamental mood of the other beginning. He repeatedly brings up wonder in the context of those fundamental moods pertaining to the other beginning, and he says that what startled dismay means might best become clear by opposing it to wonder. In fact, wonder and startled dismay are essentially connected because, ultimately, there is only one fundamental mood which comes to appearance in different ways, depending on the historical situation (Martin Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* [1936–38] *Gesamtausgabe*, Vol. 65 [Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann], 1989, 22 ff.). See also James McGuirk, 'Husserl and Heidegger on Reduction and the Question of the Existential Foundations of Rational Life', *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 18, no. 1 (2010): 31–56.

43. For an illustration of the connection between alienness and technology, one could think of Frankenstein and several other examples in literature and movies.

Chapter 7

Origins of (Inter-)Subjectivity

Here again, then, we see language (*Sprache*) as the existence (*Dasein*) of Spirit.

Hegel, PhS, 478/395

The human homeworld ... is fundamentally determined by language.

Husserl, Hua XV, 224 f

Husserl has often been accused of not attending sufficiently to the theme of the Other, or intersubjectivity. These accusations will be examined here with respect to three dimensions of otherness drawn from Hegel's philosophy. Given that Hegel is the philosopher who introduced cultural communities as a topic for philosophy, he can be considered an exemplary philosopher of intersubjectivity. Furthermore, Hegel was the first to describe the dynamics of the relation between the I and the Other, which for him undergoes a master-slave dialectic. The master-slave dialectic has been very influential, especially in twentieth-century French phenomenology, notwithstanding the more general criticisms directed at Hegel as a system philosopher. Particularly relevant for our purposes are those parts of Hegel's thought concerned with the relations between communities that can be read as nested in each other or as growing out of one another: from the dyad (be it a loving relationship, as in Hegel's early philosophy, or the life-and-death struggle from which the master and slave emerge) to small groups or families and further on to the community of economic interests ('civil society') and finally the political state with its 'spirit of a people' (*Volksgeist*).

If it turns out that Husserl elucidates the different kinds of relations between me and the Other, as well as others in the plural, in a phenomenologically convincing fashion, then while this will not refute all criticism it will

serve to indicate that the familiar critique of Husserl's account of intersubjectivity should at least not be accepted without further examination. Upon closer consideration, it will emerge that Husserl's insight into the originary inaccessibility of the other person is the essential inspiration for the philosophy of the Other in Sartre, Levinas and Derrida. Derrida acknowledges this explicitly: 'It is still a very profound lesson that Husserl taught us ...: I have no originary access to the alter-ego *as such*.'¹

OTHERNESS IN ME

Contemporary French philosophy often points out that an otherness in me is a precondition for relating to otherness 'outside of me', that is, to another person.² What is not usually discussed, however, is just what kind of precondition is at stake here. From the phenomenological perspective, it seems more plausible and less problematic to examine an otherness in me which can be linked to the way in which the 'other' Other is given to me than to ask the more metaphysical question of how, more precisely, this otherness conditions the encounter with the Other. Further, this otherness-in-sameness is often presented as if it were a novel discovery, but it is already there in Hegel and other German idealists. German idealism was certainly well aware of the significance of the relation to the other and of the need to acknowledge, in the end, that this otherness is a split in the self, in which 'that which is differentiated spontaneously moves in its own self and returns into its unity'.³

Hegel emphasizes that self-consciousness is nothing immediate but exists only as self-consciousness once it has undergone a process of mediation. Hegel thus dissents from the Cartesian picture, which builds on 'my' self-certainty as fundamental. In Husserl's phenomenology we find, despite its being influenced by Descartes early on, parallels between my being conscious of my own ego and my perception of the Other. What is at issue, more precisely, is the mode of being that belongs to the transcendental ego, which is difficult to capture.⁴ The transcendental ego has to remain problematic, 'always with a residuum which remains unthematic – remains, so to speak, anonymous'.⁵ The transcendental ego can never truly be -made an object. Therefore, Husserl speaks of the 'uniqueness' and 'indeclinability' of the transcendental ego as that which even constitutes its own declinability (namely, as empirical ego).⁶ But how, then, can we even speak about the transcendental ego?

The transcendental ego always relates to the world, and it seems reasonable to conceive it as precisely this world relation or as relatedness to the world.⁷ This world relation always occurs as a 'now', and yet it has an extension, an extension that in each instance comprises the whole of retention, original impression and protention that Husserl designates as the 'living present'

(*lebendige Gegenwart*).⁸ In order to reach the centre or core of this living present, the horizons of past and future need to be bracketed; the ‘pure there’ (*reine Da*) of the present remains. Within this radicalized reduction, we encounter an enduring core, yet we also see that this core is perpetually flowing and withdrawing. The complex relation between enduring, unified form and streaming manifold is presented by Klaus Held in a helpful image: ‘The “now” as standing and enduring form of current presence marks everything that flows through it, puts the stamp of the one present on it, as it were, and effects in this way that the marked “now” immediately turns into a temporal position.’⁹

Because of this streaming, I always already have a distance from myself, and at the same time there is a connection, due to the field being extended. For my reflection, it holds true that I always come too late and cannot ever grasp the ego in its actual functioning. ‘The originally living (*urlebendig*) pole in the originally living act has to always be distinguished from the pole confronted and as such no longer living; it is the latter which the new, originally living pole encounters.’¹⁰ However, I am only able to reflect because I always come too late; without distance, we see even less than we can during the night in which all cows are black. The ego can thus only return to itself because it continuously streams, and it can only identify with itself because it is already unified with itself as enduring ego.

Is it possible to examine the transcendental ego more closely? One possible strategy would be to include other egos in our considerations. The transcendental ego as standing-streaming is in itself the unity of a plurality. The ego upon which I reflect always precedes the reflecting ego, and yet they form a unity. In order to explain how intersubjective experience is possible, Husserl tends to draw a comparison between alien experience (*Fremderfahrung*) and remembering.¹¹ The commonality consists in the fact that both remembering and intersubjectivity involve a plurality of experiences of the same object, in one instance as a temporal succession, in the other as a simultaneity. The mediating point of connection is in both instances the object’s identity. I encounter the other ego as other *ego*, because due to the commonly experienced world, I experience it as a functioning, constituting ego. To be sure, there are significant differences between remembering and alien experience. The experiences of the Other are in principle only accessible to me in the mode of inaccessibility, whereas my own past experiences belong to the same stream of consciousness as my present ones.¹²

Nevertheless, it is conceivable that the very inaccessibility of the other ego may reveal something about the sense in which even my own past ego is alien to me. Thus the familiar occurrence of remembering ‘in me’ would then not only reveal something about the supposedly incomprehensible experience of the other ego, but would also help to explain how intersubjective experience discloses something about the nature of our transcendental ego. Husserl talks

of the 'community' of the present with the past ego, thus borrowing a concept that derives from the intersubjective realm: 'In empathy (*Einfühlung*), in originally understanding them and having them as persons in co-presence, I am in contact (*in Fühlung*) as I with the Thou, with the other ego, similarly to the way in which I am in contact with myself in the difference of remembering, in a community of consciousness with the past ego.'¹³

The connection comes about because the ego in its functioning accepts its own anonymous and singular pre-givenness in the same way as it accepts the givenness of the Other. There is a kind of communalization, not just in the sense that a plurality is taken together but in the sense that this unity-in-manifoldness is not in my power; it is pre-given to me just as much as is the Other. In both instances, we encounter an inaccessibility or unreadability that makes us aware of the limits of our comprehension. In fact, the inaccessibility of the other ego is more familiar to us than the inaccessibility of our own transcendental ego, because it is manifested in everyday phenomena. But phenomenological analysis reveals that there is already an original inaccessibility within myself.

THE OTHER IN HEGEL

The theme of the Other as other person will be approached here with the help of Hegel's master-slave dialectics in *Phenomenology of Spirit* and in the next section with the help of Husserl's *V. Cartesian Meditation*. We will see that in both Hegel's and Husserl's presentations of the issue of intersubjectivity there is a strong element of narrativity. This narrativity can be misleading. Both Hegel's chapter on self-consciousness and Husserl's *V. Cartesian Meditation* present us with a dynamic that, due to the account's narrativity, can easily be misunderstood as a process of temporal succession or as a development that plays out in factual time as an empirical sequence of events. In both instances, this form of presentation is methodologically justified, since the relation to the Other is, indeed, a dynamic one that plays out between the individuals involved. At the same time, the presentation is misleading, since the narrative separates elements that are always already in place when we encounter actual others. The basic relations may be reflected indirectly in factual life, but an overly literal reading yields absurd consequences. For example, thinking about times of actual slavery or about real violent struggles between two people in which one barely survives does not help us achieve a better understanding of Hegel's chapter. Rather, Hegel presents us with a 'phenomenology'. The question is how the concept of recognition 'appears to consciousness'.¹⁴ What Hegel considers are thus not actual processes of recognition, but the appearances of the concept of recognition. To this end, he

divides the concept into several essential aspects, so that he can successively explain these before connecting them to each other.

Recognition is no simple, harmonious accomplishment, but must be fought for. It is a struggle because the relation between one self-consciousness and another is, at bottom, asymmetrical. Initially, self-consciousness is directed at independent objects that it annihilates by incorporating them. But desire cannot find any real satisfaction in such objects, since it has continuously to repeat this process of annihilation. To put it simply: We eat, but we always get hungry again. Self-consciousness is, therefore, dependent on the objects it desires and has to produce them again and again in order to devour them. This circle can be broken only if self-consciousness finds something that is not just another object but is, rather, something that also exercises this movement of negation, rather than merely being exposed to it – that is, something like itself. This insight, from the beginning of the chapter on self-consciousness, serves as a very good example of how the processes explained here are not intended to indicate a temporal succession, but, rather, a conceptual development. It is not ever the case that we find ourselves surrounded by objects and then suddenly encounter a different consciousness for the first time; rather, Hegel is giving an account of the difference in our relations to these two very different kinds of entity.

‘Self-consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness.’¹⁵ If two beings carrying out this same movement (since they both are self-consciousnesses) enter into a relationship, an interesting dynamic ensues, a ‘play’. More precisely, this dynamic is a struggle, as each self-consciousness initially seeks recognition from the other without recognizing the other. The struggle for recognition results from the fact that each wants to impose their own standpoint on the other. When this struggle proves to be a ‘life-and-death struggle’,¹⁶ this is not just because I want to succeed in imposing my standpoint, but because I want thus to succeed as a free being and gain recognition of myself as free. Free or pure self-consciousness is characterized by not being tied to objects in the world; it is willing to turn away from everything material and thus risk its own death. The winner of the struggle is not the one who brings about the death or surrender of the Other, but the one who, through not holding on to anything but himself or herself, comes closest to death.

The self-consciousness that comes closest to death emerges from the struggle as the lord or master, the other as the bondsman who holds on to existence or being and is not willing to let go of life. The lord has now become self-consciousness for itself, since this self-consciousness is mediated with itself. This mediation is twofold: The lord relates to the bondsman in a mediated fashion through the beings (or things) that the bondsman holds on to and to the beings through the bondsman.¹⁷ The bondsman is tied to

being, to things, as if with a 'chain', since he was not able to abandon them in the struggle; now the bondsman has to labour on things, while the lord can simply enjoy them. But as it turns out – in the most well-known step of this Hegelian dialectic – the lord has not really gained what he fought for, namely, recognition from an independent self-consciousness. The bondsman cannot provide recognition for the lord since he is tied to objective being and thus is not truly independent. Moreover, the lord is not really free, since he is dependent on the bondsman and his mediating labour. The bondsman, by contrast, experiences a kind of recognition through things. Even though this recognition occurs on a lower or more primitive level, the following still holds true: 'Through work, the bondsman becomes conscious of what he truly is' or comes to be himself.¹⁸

The bondsman has a special relationship to the objective being on which he works. On the one hand, it is the very being that he was unable to abandon during the struggle and before which he trembled in 'fear of death', while the lord was experiencing only 'some lesser dread'.¹⁹ On the other hand, he can form and shape this objective being to which he is related in an intimate and intricate fashion. The formed thing bears traces of the bondsman, and in this way he gains recognition. The bondsman 'comes to see in the independent being [of the object] its own independence (*als seiner selbst*)', and at the same time he can see the for-itself of consciousness in the lord.²⁰ By way of a dialectical reversal, the bondsman's consciousness proves to be the real victor in the struggle. What emerges is a first step towards recognition, though it should be noted that mutual recognition in Hegel's sense only fully comes about on a different level: not in self-consciousness but in the communal consciousness that Hegel designates as the spirit of a people (*Volksgeist*).²¹

What is the result of the master-slave dialectic (which could only be presented here in a truncated form)? Self-consciousness requires another self-consciousness in order to know itself: There cannot be just one self-consciousness. Rather, self-consciousness always requires another self-consciousness in order to know itself; a lone self-consciousness is an impossibility, because phenomenologically it needs to be doubled. Self-consciousness is nothing immediate, but exists *as* self-consciousness only after undergoing a process of mediation. Hegel here provides an indirect critique of Descartes, who takes 'my' certainty of myself as the basis of any consciousness. According to Descartes, this certainty is given to me immediately. In his discussion of the Cartesian *cogito* in the *Encyclopaedia*, however, Hegel points out that immediate knowing is the 'product and result of mediated knowing'.²² According to Hegel, there is no certainty of myself that could serve as a stable basis for postulating a creator God so as to allow us to 'prove' the existence of the outer world. Self-consciousness in the genuine sense is achieved only through the mediation of another self-consciousness.

We have already seen that Husserl, despite his initial Cartesian streak, is also aware of the close connection between alien consciousness and one's own consciousness. This can be seen even more clearly in Husserl's *V. Cartesian Meditation*.

THE OTHER IN HUSSERL

It can be instructive to think about philosophical texts in terms of the question to which they aspire to give an answer.²³ Husserl's *V. Cartesian Meditation* is a text which has been subject to a lot of criticism, and interpreters seem to agree that the text fails to accomplish its task as they perceive it. But do interpreters actually agree on the task or on the question that is posed and supposedly not successfully answered? This does not seem to be the case. At first, it might seem that the *V. Cartesian Meditation* strives to provide an answer to the general philosophical question, 'How can the existence of other minds be proven?' This is presumed even by prominent philosophers like Sartre, Ricoeur and Habermas.²⁴ Yet an intention to establish the certain existence of other minds would run counter to Husserl's phenomenological project as a whole, and the text of the *Cartesian Meditations*, indeed, does not raise this question. True to his phenomenological method, Husserl investigates *how* the Other is given to me, not *whether* the Other exists. The fact that we live in an intersubjective world is taken as the basis which guides the investigation; this fact re-emerges at the end of the text as a 'reconstruction' after a methodological abstraction.

It seems thus that the *V. Cartesian Meditation* has a more modest goal than often assumed, yet a goal which follows from the phenomenological method and which has influenced phenomenological accounts of intersubjectivity ever since – and especially those phenomenologists who criticize Husserl quite vehemently. The shortest formulation of the question of the *V. Cartesian Meditation* would be: '*How is the Other given to me on the most basic level?*' The response which the text gives to this question would then be as follows: The Other is accessible as inaccessible or in Husserl's more careful rendition: 'The character of the existent "other" has its basis in this kind of verifiable accessibility of what is not originally accessible.'²⁵ The Other is accessible in the mode of inaccessibility, or to put the same paradox differently, the Other's mode of accessibility consists in his or her inaccessibility.

The inaccessibility of the Other manifests itself on the everyday level in the experience that I cannot really know what the other person is thinking, as it were. The phenomenological analysis reveals the deeper level of this mundane experience: the inaccessibility of the Other's internal world or sphere (a concept which will be explored later). Because of this inaccessibility, I can

never fully understand or anticipate the Other. On the other hand, there is a certain accessibility between me and the Other to which our communication testifies. It is only through this accessibility that the inaccessibility can come to appearance.

Formulating the question of the *V. Cartesian Meditation* as concerned with how the Other is given to me does not mean to deny that Husserl in this text repeatedly asks about the objectivity of the world. Yet the issues of otherness and objectivity are intertwined; Husserl starts from our experience of the world as intersubjective and objective and strives to elucidate this givenness. As Husserl puts it very clearly in the concluding sentence of the *V. Cartesian Meditation*: '[P]henomenological explication does nothing but *explicate the sense this world has for us, prior to any philosophizing*, and obviously gets solely from our experience – *a sense which philosophy can uncover but never alter*.'²⁶ Phenomenology can explain how it is part of our perception of the world that we perceive it as a shared world, shared by other subjects, but it cannot change this sense; nor can it establish the certainty of the existence of others and the world. When phenomenology examines the world, it turns out that the sense of world includes that it is objective and intersubjectively shared. Furthermore, the phenomenological analysis shows that the Other is given in such a way that he or she is essential for my sense of world without the world of the Other ever being entirely accessible to me.

But why is it so easy to misunderstand the goal of the *V. Cartesian Meditation*? As David Carr has pointed out, a major reason for misunderstandings can be found in Husserl's slightly misleading usage of the notion of solipsism.²⁷ Husserl uses the term solipsism even though he is not at all concerned with the problem of solipsism in any traditional sense. Solipsism in the traditional (non-phenomenological) sense names the suspicion that others might only be a product of my imagination; the solution to such traditional solipsism would be a proof of the existence of others (or other minds). Husserl does not want to prove that others exist; his ambition is far more modest: He wants to show that it is possible to make sense, phenomenologically speaking, of the Other in his or her otherness. Although Husserl is, indeed, not concerned with the problem of solipsism in the traditional sense, he does at certain moments use the term in the traditional, albeit critical way. This is the case especially at the end of the text, where he states that 'the illusion (*Schein*) of a solipsism is dissolved'.²⁸ This does not just mean that the problem has been resolved, but that the problem was an illusion from the start.

When Husserl in the *V. Cartesian Meditation* suggests performing a 'solipsistic reduction', he, indeed, suggests a thought-experiment and, more precisely, an abstraction.²⁹ Husserl uses the terms 'abstract' and 'abstraction' quite frequently throughout the text to emphasize this character of his analysis. If I perform the peculiar thematic reduction that Husserl calls the

solipsistic reduction, I am requested to abstract from everything which the Other contributes to my sense of world. As a result, I am left with a version of nature and with my own body, but I also experience the bodies of others – as mere physical bodies. However, the nature that belongs to the solipsistic sphere would not be the kind of nature studied by the sciences because it would be lacking objectivity. It would consist of tress and rocks, but I would not really know them in their full sense of trees and rocks because the Other usually contributes to these concepts of mine, and in the solipsistic reduction, I imagine a world without any contribution from the Other. Similarly, a strange experience of the Other's body is part of my solipsistic sphere, as a mere physical body which is neither objective nor inhabited by an alien subjectivity. Even though my experience of what is other belongs to my solipsistic sphere, this is not truly an experience of the other *as other*, but of the other as reduced to mere physicality, devoid of the Other's consciousness, contributions and conceptions.

The sphere to which the thought-experiment of the solipsistic reduction leads me is designated by Husserl as the *sphere of ownness*. It involves an abstraction from everything which the Other contributes to my sense of world. The 'sphere of ownness' appears enigmatic as well as problematic for at least two reasons: First, how could it even be possible to perform an 'abstraction from everything that transcendental constitution gives me as Other'³⁰? Second, how would it be useful, that is, how can such an abstraction help elucidate the sense of the Other? The same response can be given to both of these concerns: The exploration of the sphere of ownness is, indeed, questionable where *my* sphere of ownness is concerned since the reduction to the sphere of ownness is always artificial. Such a sphere must be isolated through an act of abstraction, and this abstraction is only interesting because it helps elucidate the sphere of ownness of the *Other*. Yet when it comes to the Other, the abstraction is, indeed, legitimate and methodologically helpful, since the alien sphere of ownness designates that which is inaccessible to me.

This methodological step corresponds to the way in which the natural attitude would approach the problem of solipsism. For the natural attitude, thought experiments about solipsism usually involve scenarios of a child growing up in the forest, a person being stranded on an island and so on. Connecting to common sense, Husserl mentions 'humans in a cave or a box' in a manuscript on solipsism.³¹ Yet this example is merely an illustration for Husserl, complementing his thought-experiment of abstraction. The solipsistic sphere of ownness is a methodological and provisional concept because Husserl is not ultimately interested in an abstractive sphere that does not actually exist. In the solipsistic sphere, we do not consider the others as others but only as physical objects within my sphere. Bodies of others, cultural products and so on are in that sense part of my solipsistic sphere – yet not as

human bodies and not as cultural products. However, when considering this sphere thoroughly, it points to the sense of the Other. The sense of the Other's body is missed if it is limited to a physical body which would move without directions and intentions. In the thought-experiment, I would still perceive the body of the Other with arms, hands, legs and so on, but these would seem to move around arbitrarily. Yet no matter how hard I try to take the Other as a mere abstraction, that is, as a mere physical object, the Other will alert me that there is not merely a physical body over there, but a lived body (*Leib*) which resembles my own, with an alien sphere of ownness.

How, then, is the Other constituted? How is he or she given to me as another person? Husserl explains the relation between the mere physical body which appears to me in the solipsistic reduction and the 'full' sense of the Other with the help of the concepts of 'pairing' and 'appresentation'. *Pairing* designates the way in which I group two or more items together because of their likeness, in this case: my body and that of the Other which are connected through similarities in demeanour, gestures, postures and so on. This concept operates on the level of passive synthesis (see Chapter 5) since it relies on association as the main principle of this kind of synthesis which does not need to involve the active engagement of the ego. Merely by way of similarities and contrast, there is a connection established between my body and that of the other without any specific judgments being passed.

Yet in order for this body which reminds me of my own to be given as a lived body, as the body of the Other, an additional step is necessary. As with 'pairing', Husserl uses a term which is not confined to the realm of intersubjectivity, but describes general processes of perception, especially from the genetic perspective. *Appresentation* means that I bring something to presence in addition to what is actually given to me as present: I make it co-present, so to speak. In this case, what is actually present is the body of the Other, and I appresent what is missing to turn the body of the Other into the full sense of the Other. To make matters worse, Husserl fluctuates in the *V. Cartesian Meditation* between 'appresentation' and '(analogizing) apperception', where apperception generally designates that which I grasp: my perception and what is added to it as 'ap-perceived'. Both terms – appresentation and apperception – include the prefix 'ap-' (originally Latin 'ad') which means 'to', designating my 'full' presentation or perception, inclusive of that which passive synthesis has added 'to' it by way of association.

My appresentation of the Other is determined by an intriguing dynamic between 'here' and 'there'. I am here, and the Other is over there. Yet by way of appresentation, I could be over there – in real terms, because I could move to the place of the Other at some later point and, in fictive terms, because I could imagine myself over there right now; I can conceive of myself 'as if' I was over there.³² However, I can never really be over there right now, and,

in that sense, the inescapable otherness of the Other is confirmed on the level of bodily perspectives. The Other is the being who is 'there' in such a way that I can be there at some later point, and I can even imagine myself over there right now, but I cannot actually be 'there' right now because 'there' is where the Other is (while I am 'here').

Pairing and appresentation are then complemented by empathy (*Einfühlung*) where I literally 'feel' myself 'into' the other person and establish that the perceived body is a lived body, not a mere physical body, which brings about this comportment similar to my own. Empathy does not diminish the inaccessibility of the Other; it does not mean that the Other's sphere of ownness becomes transparent to me, but that I feel myself into the Other and intuit that there is, indeed, a sphere of ownness there.

It is important to bear in mind that Husserl does not claim that we run through the processes of pairing, appresentation and empathy when we encounter other people. In a certain sense, the introduction of these processes becomes necessary because of the thought-experiment of the solipsistic reduction which serves to entangle our complex intersubjective lifeworld by trying to determine what exactly the Other contributes to it. As we have seen, the procedure of abstraction leaves us with a layer which can be distinguished, but not separated in our experience.

Husserl, therefore, comes to introduce another, more encompassing version of the sphere of sphere of ownness: the 'primordial sphere of ownness'.³³ This is the sphere that includes 'my actual and possible experience of what is other';³⁴ it is the sphere of everything that is part of my stream of consciousness and immediately accessible to me. The concept of the sphere of ownness creates problems for our understanding which are not coincidental, especially now that we have encountered two such concepts. The problems emerge from the way in which Husserl attempts to take apart an experience that is always more advanced than the abstract picture he asks us to think through. Our full sphere of ownness includes all our experiences as immediately accessible to us. The Other's sphere of ownness which Husserl is striving to illuminate is not a sphere limited to an experience of a solipsistic world, abstracted from other subjects, cultural objects and so on, but a sphere of experiencing the world in its entirety, yet in a way which is inaccessible to me. The initial, solipsistic sphere of ownness which tried to abstract from everything that the Other contributes to my experience thus served a methodological role, but was a merely provisional concept, to be replaced by the more encompassing primordial sphere of ownness. Otherwise, the Other's sphere of ownness would not even be of interest to me because it would be entirely inaccessible, while the challenge is to conceive of the real paradox which serves as our guiding thread throughout this chapter: to be accessible in the mode of inaccessibility.

Although solipsism, indeed, serves a methodological role as a thought-experiment, exploring how the already-existent Other is given rather than proving his or her existence, some problems still remain. First, even if his solipsistic reduction is a methodological step and does not refer to solipsism in the traditional sense, it may still seem questionable whether Husserl can withstand the charge of a solipsism emerging from his methodology. Second, the claim that the Other is accessible in the mode of inaccessibility is a rather paradoxical response to the question concerning the Other's givenness. It turns out that these two issues are closely related to each other.

Husserl's response to the first hesitation involves his notion of transcendental intersubjectivity. Ultimately, the world is not constituted by transcendental subjectivity but by transcendental intersubjectivity; more precisely, transcendental subjectivity turns out to be transcendental intersubjectivity. The objectivity of the world which Husserl aims to elucidate in the *V. Cartesian Meditation* is the product of transcendental intersubjectivity. At the same time, my transcendental consciousness is the place where intersubjectivity and the intersubjective world come to appearance. The transcendental ego, 'starting from itself and in itself, ... constitutes transcendental intersubjectivity, to which it then adds itself as a merely privileged member'.³⁵ To be sure, 'constitution' means that the ego endows the Other with a sense or meaning, not with existence. But do I myself not owe just as much to the sense-giving of others? Husserl not only left this possibility open but, in some texts, even seems to find it persuasive. Yet he emphasizes that even if I owe myself as an ego to others, it still holds that the transcendental ego is the place, as it were, where this state of affairs comes to the fore. 'Only by starting from the ego and the system of its transcendental functions and accomplishments can we methodically exhibit transcendental intersubjectivity and its transcendental communalization';³⁶ everything that can be said about me and my dependence on the Other will need to be said from the perspective of the ego. The transcendental ego is thus merely the place where transcendental intersubjectivity comes to appearance. Yet in order for us to experience the world as we do, that is, as objective, transcendental intersubjectivity is presupposed. Furthermore, it has to be kept in mind that the transcendental ego is itself not entirely accessible to me, as we have seen in the first section of this chapter.

THE WORLD OF OTHERS

But what about pluralities of others? What about communities? Communities of others appear in Hegel's philosophy initially in the shape of plurality; he refers to them as 'national spirits' or the 'spirits of peoples' (*Volksgeister*).

Spirit can be conceived – at least provisionally – as the unity of different self-consciousnesses or as ‘universal consciousness’ (*Gesamtbewusstsein*).³⁷ The ‘spirit of a people’ designates the consciousness of an historical people as it becomes manifest in its cultural products, law, politics, values, convictions and cultural mood.

Husserl also provides an account of unities of subjects that are more than the mere sums of their members. However, it is necessary to distinguish between ‘loose communities’, for which an encompassing personality is lacking (e.g. groups of people who merely happen to be in the same place, be it by chance or by force), and such unities that exhibit the characteristics of an individual person, albeit by analogy.³⁸ Husserl mentions as examples families, clubs and nations – not unlike Hegel’s institutions of ethical life (*Sittlichkeit*) – and explains that the will of a state is different from the will of a citizen. In the case of the state, it is justified to speak of the ‘unity of a supra-personal consciousness’ (*Einheit eines überpersonalen Bewusstseins*) and of a ‘communal person’ (*Gemeinschaftsperson*).³⁹

Husserl compares the relation between the individual person and the communal person (or personality of a higher order) to the relation between a cell and an organism. An organism is obviously more than a mere heap of cells; it functions as a specific unity with an inner organization. Can there be an answer to the question of whether the organism precedes the cell or vice versa? Without entering into biological debates, we can say that in its appearing the organism precedes the cells. That is, we first and foremost encounter organisms. Does Husserl here contradict Hegel, who treats institutions like the family, civil society and the state after he treats of the individual, because they are later for us (yet earlier in themselves)? No. First, we should not draw too many conclusions from Husserl’s image of an organism: It is merely an image, and he barely develops it. Second, Hegel would agree that I always already find myself within a family, civil society and state. It is just that the concepts of these institutions are grasped later only after I have acquired a consciousness of myself.

In order for to justify this talk of a personality of a higher order, there needs to be an ‘abiding habituality’ similar to that of the individual.⁴⁰ In other words, a personality of a higher order has to be united by way of a shared history. For this reason, a group of people gathered at a bus stop cannot qualify as a personality of a higher order – even if the bus does not arrive for a long time. In order for a supra-individual consciousness to take shape, there have to be ‘communal memories’; there has to be a tradition.⁴¹ Nevertheless, there are many different ways in which consciousnesses can be unified, and personalities of a higher order need to be distinguished from ‘merely communicative communities, effective communities; a language does not come about like a state constitution in a parliamentary state’.⁴² This does not exclude a language

community from having an encompassing consciousness, but it does mean that sharing a language is not enough. The French are united by a common constitution; the mere fact that a part of the Belgian population speaks the French language does not mean that there is a personality of a higher order comprised of the French and a number of Belgians.

How can the unification of a personality of a higher order be determined more generally? Husserl's examination of intersubjectivity shows that the encounter with the Other is always mediated through the encounter with the shared world or the common object. In turn, world only exists as intersubjective. The objectivity of a thing in perception is established only when others also perceive it and when I can communicate with them about it.⁴³ In the case of a 'communal person' (*Gemeinschaftsperson*), the paradigm of communal experience is not so much the perceived object as communal actions and practices.⁴⁴ Through the shared directedness that comes from pursuing a common purpose – be it a specific purpose like performing a play or a much more general one like living together in a state – the group is constituted as a group. Just like perception, acting is intentional. Supra-individual consciousness is characterized by remembering the past and being directed towards the future. Although the original purpose of the group may no longer be present after a certain period of time, it is still functional in a habitual fashion.

An additional complication arises at this point. In his late philosophy Husserl introduces further concepts for communities that are linked by a shared history, namely, the concepts of homeworld and alienworld, as discussed in the previous chapter. How are 'personalities of a higher order' related to homeworlds and alienworlds? It is unlikely that there is a homeworld to which Husserl would not attribute a supra-individual consciousness (at least as habitualized). Conversely, there is no 'personality of a higher order' conceivable that would not be familiar enough to us for us to feel in some sense at home in it. Thus, the two appear to designate the same phenomenon. There are no statements in which Husserl makes this explicit, but when Husserl introduces 'personalities of a higher order' in Section 58 of the *Cartesian Meditations* he mentions 'cultural worlds' and states that there is 'my' cultural world, and alien ones standing over against it.

One may speculate that the term 'homeworld' belongs to a later period of Husserl's thought and thus emerges predominantly in the last of the three volumes on intersubjectivity, *Husserliana* XV, whereas 'personalities of a higher order' are discussed mostly in the second volume, *Husserliana* XIV. Furthermore, the two terms have a different emphasis. As history gains significance for Husserl and the concept of the lifeworld becomes central to his thought, the terms 'homeworld' and 'alienworld' seem appropriate designations for

such historical, co-constitutive worlds. However, the expression ‘personalities of a higher order’ is not simply an earlier, less developed version of the later notions. First, Husserl’s point of departure is reflected in it, namely, individual personal consciousness, which shares certain characteristics with supra-individual consciousness. Second, ‘higher’ points to a more advanced level and thus to a development in Husserl’s philosophy from the individual to supra-individual personalities.

Husserl designates ‘the genetic problems of birth and death and the generative nexus’ as problems of a ‘higher dimension’, higher than the individual ego and its inner time-consciousness.⁴⁵ He is concerned with social and communal phenomena in general and thus also with the formation of personalities of a higher order. With the expression ‘higher level’, Husserl does not mean to suggest any form of sublation in the Hegelian sense – even though individual consciousness is, indeed, preserved, negated and elevated in supra-individual consciousness. For Husserl, all phenomena are related back to individual consciousness, where they come to appear. Despite this important difference between Husserl and Hegel, there is a point of significant agreement that emerges when we relate ‘higher order’ to the distinction between ‘abstract’ and ‘concrete’. Husserl explains:

The constitution of an abiding co-humanity and general sociality in correlative relation to a practical environing world (*Umwelt*) can be treated abstractly already prior to the generation (*Generation*). Due to the form of temporalization of this practical environing world as personally significant, there is already an abstract historicity inherent in it. When the generation comes into play, this progress in concreteness is also a concretion of the abiding co-humanities, mother or parents and child, etc., and simultaneously, we encounter a more concrete, generatively formed temporalization and historical environing world.⁴⁶

Generative phenomena are thus more concrete than static and genetic phenomena. In a similar fashion, Husserl had previously distinguished genetic phenomenology from static phenomenology in terms of a progression in concretion, since the first is concerned with the concrete monad and with the concrete ego that is formed from abstract elements.⁴⁷ The development thus resembles movements in Hegel’s philosophy; the abstract is the first for us, *proteron pros hemas*, and, at the end of the investigation, we reach the concrete, which is first by nature *proteron te physei*. Ultimately, all the earlier shapes were abstractions of absolute Spirit knowing itself, just as in Husserl we start with a static phenomenology that turns out to be the most abstract in the end. Genetic phenomenology abstracts from this historical dimension, and static phenomenology presents another level of abstraction that does not consider any temporal becoming.⁴⁸

THE QUESTION OF THE UNITY OF SPIRIT, WORLD, TELEOLOGY

Interestingly, this progression yields what Husserl calls a new 'absolute'. The final absolute is no longer the transcendental ego, but 'taken *concretely*, what is *absolute* is this multiplicity as a multiplicity of subject poles, poles for a separate concrete life, concrete intending and experiencing which belongs to each of these poles'.⁴⁹ Since it has emerged that the transcendental ego can experience the world in a genuine sense only when it is in a communion with others, absoluteness has to be attributed to the communion rather than to the individual ego.⁵⁰ Dan Zahavi traces out the absoluteness of the monadic community by examining the relativity of ego and other ego.⁵¹ 'Fremdich' is undoubtedly a relational concept; any talk of another ego presupposes the relation back to my own ego, to which the other ego is alien.

The fact that the transcendental ego is in a certain sense also alien to itself, as discussed earlier, does not change the relational character. First, alien experience emerged as a possibility of finding out more about the essence of the transcendental ego; in that sense, alien experience has a certain priority, which does not diminish its relationality. Second, the functioning ego accepts its own character as pre-given just as much as it accepts the givenness of others, yet the relation back to the ego is never abandoned, and we do not mistake the experience of others for an experience of our own ego. The other ego is thus other for me, and the in-itself of the other ego remains undetermined. However, the ego is a relational concept as well; without a 'you' or 'thou', there would not be an ego; without the alien, there is no own.⁵² The mode of being for both my own ego and the alien ego is thus relativity. Hence, only the communities of monads are absolute in the genuine sense, or, as Husserl puts it, the absolute is 'the intersubjective relatedness (*Aufeinanderbezogenheit*) of absolute subjectivities'.⁵³

Zahavi also mentions that Husserl's presentation of this problem is reminiscent of Hegel's idealism, yet cites Fink, who points out that Husserl's approach is no 'metaphysical construction'.⁵⁴ Husserl himself says so: 'Actually, therefore, phenomenological explication is nothing like "metaphysical construction"; and it is neither overtly nor covertly a theorizing with adopted presuppositions or helpful thoughts drawn from the historical metaphysical tradition.'⁵⁵ Husserl emphasizes repeatedly that his results regarding intersubjectivity are based on 'facts of consciousness' (*Bewusstseinstatsachen*) and that the connection between individual subjects and personalities of a higher order is the 'most immediate fact' of experience.⁵⁶ At the same time, he states that his results are metaphysical 'if it be true that ultimate cognitions of being should be called metaphysical'.⁵⁷

Concerning Husserl's relation to speculative idealism, he criticizes the latter for passing over subjectivity.⁵⁸ It is questionable whether this accusation is justified, especially since Husserl does not specify whether he means individual or communal subjectivity. In the case of individual subjectivity, self-consciousness certainly represents an essential level of *Phenomenology of Spirit*; even if it has to be overcome, it can certainly never be simply passed over. Husserl would be justified, perhaps, in saying that Hegel does not tarry with subjectivity and does not always return to it. But if he means to refer to a higher level of subjectivity, then Hegel would respond that the Absolute needs to be conceived as subject just as much as substance. Hegel certainly wants to reconcile the modern split between subjectivity and objectivity. Although Husserl overcomes this split as well, through the principle of correlation and the intentionality of consciousness, it is nevertheless always necessary for Husserl to return to constituting subjectivity. According to Husserl, the 'we' is constituted by the transcendental ego and needs to be traced back to it.

Despite this difference, there are in Husserl's analysis of the personalities of a higher order striking remarks about the 'corporeality' (*Leiblichkeit*) of these personalities. Husserl emphasizes the need for these communal shapes of consciousness to become objectified, as it were. Subjectivity can be generally experienced only if it manifests itself in a corporeal shape. There is thus a 'certain priority' of the 'physical' (*Physischen*), as physical corporeality, in experiencing the objective world.⁵⁹ It follows for the personalities of a higher order 'that the "human being at large" also has something like corporeality and a physical environing world as a world of corporeally mediated effects (*leiblich vermittelter Wirkungen*)'.⁶⁰

Furthermore, Husserl acknowledges the significance of the idealist notion of the 'common Spirit' (*Gemeingeistes*): 'The new science of humanities which was founded under the influence of German Idealism more than a century ago liked to speak of the "common Spirit". Nothing is more common than to degrade this speech as mysticism or mere fiction. However, this is fundamentally wrong (*grundverkehrt*).'⁶¹ Thus, despite the fact that Husserl considers Hegel's notion of Spirit crucial and also reflects on the origin of this concept, there are a number of important differences between Hegelian Spirit and Husserl's personalities of a higher order. In Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, absolute knowing emerges from religious consciousness, with which it shares a content but not a form (see Chapter 5 for more detail). Hegelian Spirit is more than mere collective consciousness; it starts off as we-consciousness, but when it comes to recognize itself it realizes that it is absolute. It is the absolute that wants to be with us and recognizes itself in us.

The question of the absolute emerges in Husserl's work in a complex way. One possibility is to conceive of the absolute as the non-relative. Husserl says

that what is absolute is not transcendental subjectivity, but transcendental intersubjectivity. Does this mean that there is a unified absolute, beyond the structure of homeworld and alienworld, that corresponds to Hegelian Spirit? In light of the relativity between homeworld and alienworld, the question of whether there is *one* encompassing, non-relative world arises. Husserl talks a lot about 'the common objective world', the 'world in itself'⁶² or the 'true world'⁶³ as the topic of transcendental phenomenology. At the same time, he says explicitly: 'The world in itself ... is never given.'⁶⁴ Is this a contradiction? Although this question has led to a good deal of controversy in the literature,⁶⁵ it seems to me that Husserl's position does not involve a contradiction and is in fact quite plausible: The world in itself is, indeed, never given – that is, it is never given in experience. In a manuscript about the lifeworld (1924/25), Husserl provides a helpful formulation: 'All given world is itself experiential extract of one that is not given, yet that can be experienced in its being-itself.'⁶⁶ In the next sentence, this being-itself is captured as being in the form of an 'idea'.

It is thus legitimate for phenomenology to search for 'invariant' structures of the lifeworld, which is to say, to pursue the project of a lifeworld ontology. The twofold character of the lifeworld as world-as-horizon (*Welthorizont*) and earthground (*Erboden*) and the relativity of homeworld and alienworld are all parts of such an ontology. Although every world has, in one way or another, the character of earthground, the 'one' earthground, the earthground in itself, is never given to us. What is given is this particular, relative earthground, as it comes to appearance in the context of a homeworld. Nevertheless, is it methodologically consistent for phenomenology to search for those structures, providing that we keep in mind that they are 'ideas' and not something given in experience. Likewise, we have a 'right to the idea of a complete understanding',⁶⁷ even though there are actually always limits to our understanding, because of the limits of homeworld and alienworld.

Another possibility, which is mentioned by Husserl in several manuscripts without ever being discussed or explained in detail, consists in reaching the unified absolute by following the teleological structure of history. We will return to this possibility in the next two chapters; suffice it to say for now that there is a significant difference between Hegel and Husserl here too. Since the teleological character of history in Husserl bears an essential openness, such that the goal of history lies in infinity, the divine is also much less 'conceivable' than in Hegel.

A very significant divergence becomes conspicuous here. For Hegel, Spirit comes to itself in absolute knowing and reaches complete self-knowledge. Husserl's thought, by contrast, does not allow for a complete transparency,

not only because of history's open teleology but also because of the horizontality of all experience. This horizontality designates the teleological structure on a small scale, as it were, one which becomes manifest in the continuous dynamics of intention and fulfilment or disappointment. Within intentionality, there is never complete, universal clarity. Something always remains withdrawn; what I clearly discern is surrounded by a horizon of dark indeterminacy which shifts, but which is never fully eliminated.⁶⁸

Husserl's critique of the positive sciences also concerns the fact that they mistakenly presume that we will be able to reach complete clarity and thus disregard the essential indeterminacy of the lifeworld. As far as the subject is concerned, this horizontality becomes manifest as a pre-temporal flowing in which my reflection always comes too late. We have thus come full circle and reached the beginning of this chapter; we have returned to subjectivity, as Husserl always does. We can thus summarize: Husserl conducts phenomenological investigations of the Other and of different communities of others and identifies a supra-individual consciousness that penetrates and determines a cultural world. Some of the features of the relation between me and the Other reoccur on the level of cultural worlds and in fact may even be more apparent at this level. For example, the inaccessibility of the alienworld can be explained better from the historical perspective than can the inaccessibility of the Other, according to the *V. Cartesian Meditation*. The concept of cultural worlds makes it possible for Husserl to provide a philosophical elucidation of crises as a kind of communal mood, namely, the mood of an historical world. Our European mood is that of a crisis that occurs because of a lack of sense or meaning: Communal consciousness realizes that the predominant shape of spirit does not (or does no longer) do justice to the fundamental existential mood of this homeworld. For Husserl, this shape was that of the natural sciences and their objectivism.

The concept of the homeworld may initially seem parochial and potentially old-fashioned. With the help of Husserl's late philosophy, however, such a suspicion is revealed as unfounded, in several ways. First, the concept appears well justified for those worlds that are closest and most familiar to us and allows us to observe different ways in which supra-individual consciousness manifests itself. Second, the concept of the homeworld is not only defined in relation to the alienworld; it is also always already permeated and co-determined by alienness. Third, as indicated in the quotation at the beginning of this chapter, the homeworld is essentially determined by language, and this means language in all of its phenomenological manifestations: spoken language, written language, body language, literature, poetry and various other possibilities of expression and communication. We will return to some of these (especially literature and tragedy) in the final chapter. Language in

this comprehensive and diverse sense is not just a condition for the possibility of history,⁶⁹ but also for the possibility of the givenness of the Other in its various dimensions – as accessible in the mode of inaccessibility.⁷⁰

NOTES

1. Jacques Derrida, 'Hospitality, Justice and Responsibility: A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida', in *Questioning Ethics: Contemporary Debates in Philosophy*, ed. R. Kearney et al. (London: Routledge, 1991), 71.

2. The most prominent representative is Julia Kristeva, in her text *Strangers to Ourselves* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).

3. Hegel, PhS, 588/490.

4. The most important investigation of the transcendental ego's mode of being especially in Husserl's C manuscripts on time is Klaus Held's *Lebendige Gegenwart. Die Frage der Seinsweise des transzendentalen Ich bei Edmund Husserl, entwickelt am Leitfaden der Zeitproblematik* (*The Living Present. The Question of the Transcendental Ego's Mode of Being in Edmund Husserl on the Basis of the Problem of Time*) (The Hague: Kluwer, 1966).

5. Husserl, Hua VI, 111/109.

6. Husserl, Hua VI, 188/185.

7. David Carr, *The Paradox of Subjectivity* (Oxford: New York 1999), 106.

8. Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart*, 19.

9. Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart*, 32.

10. Ms. E III 2: 27 (1920/21): 'Immer ist zu scheiden der urlebendige Pol im urlebendigen Akte ... und der zum Gegenüber gewordene und als das nicht mehr lebendige Pol, der für einen neuen, urlebendigen Pol da ist', cited in Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart*, 121.

11. Husserl, Hua I, § 55.

12. Anthony J. Steinbock, *Home and Beyond: Generative Phenomenology after Husserl* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 5 ff. Cf. David Carr 'The "Fifth Meditation" and Husserl's Cartesianism', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, XXXIV, no. 1 (1973): 24 f.

13. 'In der Einföhlung, im sie ursprünglich Verstehen und sie als Personen in Mitgegenwart Haben bin ich mit ihnen in Föhlung als Ich mit dem Du, mit dem anderen Ich, ähnllich wie ich in der Erinnerungsdifferenz in Föhlung bin, in Bewußtseinsgemeinschaft mit dem vergangenem Ich', Ms. E III 9: 84 (1931), cited in Held, *Lebendige Gegenwart*, 166.

14. Hegel, PhS, 147/113.

15. Hegel, PhS, 144/110.

16. Hegel, PhS, 149/114.

17. Hegel, PhS, 151/115.

18. Hegel, PhS, 153/118.

19. Hegel, PhS, 153 ff./116 ff.

20. Hegel, PhS, 154/118.

21. See Ludwig Siep, 'Die Bewegung des Anerkennens in der *Phänomenologie des Geistes*' ('The Movement of Recognising in the Phenomenology of Spirit'), in

G.W.F. Hegel – *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, (G.W.F. Hegel — *Phenomenology of Spirit*) ed. O. Pöggeler et al. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1998), 112 f.

22. Hegel, Enc. I, § 66.

23. Hans-Georg Gadamer suggests that understanding a text means understanding the question to which the text gives an answer (Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode (Truth and Method)* [Tübingen: Mohr, 1986], 368 ff.).

24. Sartre is dissatisfied with Husserl's method in *V. Cartesian Meditation* because it can only provide 'probability' and not certainty regarding the existence of other minds (Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* [New York: Washington Square Press, 1993], 252 f.). Ricoeur is less explicit, yet he misleadingly states that the role of *V. Cartesian Meditation* is equivalent to that of the proof of God's existence in Descartes's philosophy (Paul Ricoeur, *Husserl: An Analysis of his Phenomenology* [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967], 11). The case of Habermas is a bit more complicated; he accepts Schütz's criticism, which, despite Schütz's impressive familiarity with Husserl's work, is not a justified criticism of *V. Cartesian Meditation* (Alfred Schütz, 'The Problem of Transcendental Intersubjectivity in Husserl', in *Phenomenology: Critical Concepts in Philosophy*, ed. D. Moran et al., Vol. II [London: Routledge, 2004], 143–178). These misunderstandings also get in the way of Saulis Geniusas's otherwise helpful account (Saulis Geniusas, 'Self-Consciousness and Other: Hegel and Husserl', *Santalka. Filosofija*, 16, no. 3 [2008], 27–36).

25. Husserl, Hua I, 114/144.

26. Husserl, Hua I, 151/177.

27. Carr, 'The "Fifth Meditation"'.

28. Husserl, Hua I, 151/177.

29. The reason solipsism in the traditional sense can be nothing but an illusion is described very well by Merleau-Ponty in his essay 'The Philosopher and His Shadow'. He points out that, for Husserl, solipsism is not an original experience but a thought experiment. The philosophical problem of solipsism is always posed by abstracting from others, and this abstraction presupposes that the world is already given to us as a shared world. True solipsism – impossible on account of the Other – would require that I did not experience myself as an individual self in distinction from other selves, but as the only self (Latin *solus ipse*). In this case, however, there would not be a self in the true sense. 'We are truly alone only on the condition that we do not know we are; it is this very ignorance which is our solitude' ('The Philosopher and His Shadow', in *Signs*, trans. R. McCleary [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964], 174). Such might be the position of a baby (before it separates from its original Other), but it is not the position of the philosopher who reflects on the possibilities and dangers of solipsism.

30. Husserl, Hua I, 93/125.

31. Husserl, Hua XV, 562.

32. For a more detailed account of the real and fictive 'there', see Klaus Held, 'Husserl's Phenomenology of the Life-World', in *The New Husserl*, ed. D. Welton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 51 f.

33. For a more detailed account of the relation between the two spheres of ownership, see Tanja Stachler, 'What Is the Question to Which Husserl's Fifth Cartesian Meditation Gives the Answer?', *Husserl Studies*, 24, no. 2 (2008): 99–117.

34. Husserl, Hua I, 98/129.

35. Husserl, Hua VI, 188/185.

36. Husserl, Hua VI, 189/185 f.

37. Hegel, PhS, 145/110. 'Gesamtbewusstsein' is Manfred Riedel's term in an explanation of the structure of self-consciousness: "'Spirit" is the dialectical unfolding of this structure into the universal consciousness (*Gesamtbewusstsein*) which Hegel employs in order to explain the social-historical world and its changes' (Manfred Riedel, 'Fortschritt und Dialektik in Hegels Geschichtsphilosophie' ('Progress and Dialectics in Hegel's Philosophy of History'), in *Hegel in der Sicht der neueren Forschung*, ed. I. Fetscher [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973], 400).

38. Husserl, Hua XIV, 405 f.

39. Husserl, Hua XIV, 199, 203.

40. Husserl, Hua XIV, 405.

41. Husserl, Hua XIV, 205.

42. Husserl, Hua XIV, 201.

43. See Chapter 3; for a more detailed discussion, see Dan Zahavi, who shows that the unified givenness of a spatio-temporal object is possible only as an intersubjective experience. Dan Zahavi, *Husserl and Transcendental Intersubjectivity: A Response to the Linguistic-Pragmatic Critique*, trans. Elizabeth A. Behnke (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2001).

44. See David Carr, *Interpreting Husserl: Critical and Comparative Studies* (The Hague: Kluwer, 1987), 27 f. Carr examines to what extent it might be possible to bring to phenomenological givenness the apparently unphenomenological concept of a personality of a higher order. It is essential here to begin with being a member of a group rather than being confronted by a group (see Chapter 6 of this book). According to Carr, an essential difference between Husserl and Hegel concerns the way in which, for Hegel, the goals of the group can be unknown to the individual, whereas, for Husserl, the members of the group are always conscious of the common intentions (Carr, *Interpreting Husserl*, 273). Carr's statement is countered by statements of Husserl, such as the following: 'My spiritual effects (*geistige Wirkung*) lives on, without my intention, in unfamiliar persons and environments which do not need to have any knowledge about me' (Husserl, Hua XIV, 195). Once the personal community has been united by way of some common intention, task or experience, it continues to exist by way of habitualization, as it were, without a discernable common will or individual consciousness.

45. Husserl, Hua I, 169/142.

46. Husserl, Hua XV, 138 fn. 2.

47. Husserl, Hua XIV, 34, 43, 47. See Anthony J. Steinbock, 'Spirit and Generativity: Role and Contribution of the Phenomenologist', in *Alterity and Facticity: New Perspectives on Husserl*, ed. N. Depraz et al. (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1998), 183.

48. Steinbock, 'Spirit and Generativity', 183 f.

49. Husserl, Hua XIV, 276, my emphasis.

50. Husserl, Hua I, 166/140.

51. Zahavi, *Transcendental Intersubjectivity*, 98.

52. Zahavi, *Transcendental Intersubjectivity*, 65; cf. Husserl, Hua XIII, 6.

53. Husserl, Hua XIII, 480.
54. Zahavi, *Transcendental Intersubjectivity*, 96.
55. Husserl, Hua I, 177/150.
56. Husserl, Hua XIV, 197, 405.
57. Husserl, Hua I, 166/139.
58. Husserl, Hua VI, 272/337.
59. Husserl, Hua XIV, 404.
60. Husserl, Hua XIV, 206.
61. Husserl, Hua XIV, 404.
62. Husserl, Hua XV, 436 f.
63. Husserl, Hua XV, 215 fn.
64. Husserl, Hua XV, 614.
65. Cf. the controversial discussion between Klaus Held, 'Heimwelt, Fremdwelt, die eine Welt' ('Homeworld, Alienworld, the One World'), *Phänomenologische Forschungen* (Phenomenological Research), 24/25 (1991): 305–337 and Steinbock, *Home and Beyond*, 183–186.
66. Husserl, Hua XXXIX, 697: 'Und alle gegebene Welt ist selbst Erfahrungsausschnitt einer nicht gegebenen, aber in ihrem Selbstsein erfahrbaren.'
67. Husserl, Hua XV, 625.
68. This idea can be found even more explicitly in Heidegger in his reflections on truth as *aletheia*, as unconcealment. This unconcealment stems from an original concealment that is never eliminated. See Martin Heidegger, 'On the Essence of Truth', in *Basic Writings*, ed. D.F. Krell (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993).
69. According to Derrida, this is perhaps the most important insight of Husserl's 'The Origin of Geometry'.
70. Inaccessibility strikes me as a major discovery, indeed, of Husserl's analyses of intersubjectivity. For this reason, I have some doubts about David Carr's otherwise certainly laudable project of extending Edward S. Casey's work on place and space, and especially cultural space, to a parallel project on cultural time (David Carr, *Experience and History: Phenomenological Perspectives on the Historical World* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014], 175; Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998]). It is true, as Maxime Doyon points out in her review of Carr's monograph, that I can normally reach the place where the Other is, but not ever the Other's time, when it comes to memories and expectations (Maxime Doyon, 'Phenomenology and the Experience of the Historical' [Review of Carr, *Experience and History*], *Continental Philosophy Review*, Online First, 2016).

Chapter 8

Phenomenological Method III – Historical Phenomenology

The question of the ‘why’ is originally a question about ‘history’.

Husserl, Hua XV, 420

This chapter explores how to develop a phenomenology of the historical world, or what comes down to the same thing, an historical phenomenology of world. Hegel will play a much smaller role in this chapter than Husserl because the historical method is so intricately interwoven with Hegel’s project that we can build on previous considerations, and Hegel himself did in the final chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. With Husserl, the picture is much more complex because he did not himself supply an account of this late method. In fact, he did not even give a name. The debate whether such a third phase even exists still continues among Husserl scholars, as Husserl only explicitly mentioned the difference between static and genetic methodology. Yet we concur here with Jacques Derrida, Anthony Steinbock and others who argue that such a third phase of phenomenological methodology indeed exists, and cannot be subsumed under genetic phenomenology. However, against Steinbock and with Derrida, I would like to call this methodology ‘historical’ as it is concerned with the historical world which the lifeworld proves to be, as we have seen. Furthermore, it asks questions that Husserl calls historical – questions of ‘why’ – and one of its important manifestations is what Husserl in the *Crisis* does give a distinct name: ‘ideengeschichtlich’: concerned with a history of ideas. But first things first: Hegel and the history of Spirit.

SPIRIT AND ITS HISTORY

Hegel has enabled us to understand philosophy as historical through and through and to understand history as a directed development rather than a merely external process of time. It was he who 'for the first time introduced historical thought into philosophy *as such*' which means that philosophy 'not only *has*, but *is* a history'.¹ The decisive question which Hegel poses in the 'Introduction' to his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* concerns the issue 'as to how it happens that philosophy appears to be a development in time and has a history'.² The answer to this question is that the existence of Spirit is its deed which can best be described as knowing itself.³ Spirit's activity consists in externalizing itself while at the same time coming to itself. One form of externality is time. Since Spirit 'exists not merely as individual, finite consciousness, but as general, concrete Spirit',⁴ it unfolds not within the time-consciousness of an individual, but its development is the entire reality – as history.

This response is not only difficult to understand, but there is also an impression that something is being 'posited' – namely, a Spirit with certain essential features. This would be a violation of the maxim to start without presuppositions. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* which begins with natural consciousness and requests that we leave all assumptions to the side, the procedure is therefore a different one. Spirit emerges only at the end or, rather, in the more advanced parts of the *Phenomenology*; in the beginning, Spirit is present by way of its concept and in itself, but has not yet come to itself. Although the historicity of philosophy can be deduced from Spirit's essential features, a more plausible procedure which Hegel employs consists in preliminary reflections regarding the connection between history and philosophy. Is history something external to philosophy? Can we find indications, on a small scale, that the occurrence of events in time means more than attributing a place in a chronology to them?

Only after considering some intuitive examples (e.g. the development of the human being from infant to adult) does Hegel turn to the history of the individual. The movement of self-consciousness forms a paradigm which is repeated on the level of history, albeit in a modified shape. Self-consciousness is first a single one which desires an object. It then seeks recognition from a second self-consciousness until both are sublated in general self-consciousness. At this point, Spirit comes into play and undergoes a variation of the same movement. Spirit passes through self-alienation, realizing that it is all-encompassing. It turns out that history is an ordered process and that this order can be described as determinate negation (see Chapter 5).

Since Spirit has developed in accordance with the principle of determined negation, its movement is necessary which we can follow in its rational

structure. This has implications for our conception of the history of philosophy, and the statements from the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* quoted at the beginning of this chapter become more comprehensible. The common idea of the history of philosophy proves erroneous. The history of philosophy does not consist of an ‘accumulation of philosophical opinions’, an accumulation of arbitrary thoughts following one after the other in time.⁵ If the history of philosophy were such a ‘gallery of opinions’, it would be a matter of mere erudition and thus a ‘superfluous and boring science’.⁶ Instead, philosophy as the development of Spirit is necessarily connected and *one*; for Spirit is only *one*, and thus there is only *one* philosophy.⁷ Since Spirit externalizes itself into history, the study of the history of philosophy is the ‘study of philosophy itself’.⁸ Hegel maintains that we see the logical pathway of Spirit itself if we liberate the systems occurring in the history of philosophy from their empirical shape or factual specificity.

If philosophy is essentially one and the history of philosophy characterized by unity and connection, it also follows that the history of philosophy is relevant for us today. At first glance, the historical processes appear to be a matter of the past, situated beyond our present actuality. ‘Indeed, what we are, that is what we are in a historical fashion’⁹ – historical becoming is not the becoming of alien objects, but our becoming. What we are today is what we are on the basis of the ‘tradition’ and ‘heritage’ of history.¹⁰ The history of philosophy does not consist of that which has passed and is finished, but of that which determines our own being and becoming. Husserl will also come to this realization; but the path for him requires some detours.

HUSSERL’S PATHWAYS

While Hegel presents only one pathway for natural consciousness into philosophy (namely, the way that is described in the *Phenomenology*), Husserl envisioned several such pathways, emerging from his critique of the Cartesian way. Some of these pathways are worked out, others only intimated or sketched. In the last part of the *Crisis*, Husserl develops a way departing from the pregiven lifeworld, on the one hand, and a way from psychology, on the other (Hua VI, Part III A and III B). The way from the lifeworld is sometimes called ontological way because it involves an ontology of the lifeworld. Iso Kern can thus rely on a distinct textual basis in Husserl when he distinguishes among three ways, that is, the two ways just mentioned and the Cartesian way.¹¹

The reader will immediately notice that I, along with most interpreters, do not share many sympathies with the way through psychology as it seems not to clear and imbued with some of the elements of the Cartesian way which

Husserl certainly still always considered possible, just lacking in certain ways and mostly regarding the question of motivation. The ‘switch’ of attitude in the psychological way seems as little motivated, unless one already moves between both realms, psychology and phenomenology. The interdisciplinary or better crossdisciplinary area between psychology and phenomenology, and especially phenomenological and existential psychology, strikes me as very useful endeavours, but the way through psychology as such has no necessary bearing on them.

Husserl develops the way through phenomenological psychology as a preparation for transcendental phenomenology in the 1920s, and he still pursues this way in Part III B of the *Crisis*. In his 1927 article for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, he designs this way by introducing phenomenological psychology as a ‘propadeutic level’¹² which has ‘at least the accessibility of the positive sciences’.¹³ Phenomenological psychology attends purely to subjectivity, and objects are considered merely in their ‘how’ of appearance. However, consciousness is at first merely understood as a worldly, ‘mundane’ entity. When the researcher realizes that such a conception concerning the mode of being of consciousness leads to contradictions, he or she is motivated to undertake the transition to transcendental philosophy and recognize that consciousness is transcendental. Phenomenological psychology, when thought through to the end, leads into transcendental phenomenology, so Husserl argues.¹⁴ The advantage of the way through psychology consists in the fact that the two main difficulties of the introduction to phenomenology are ‘distributed onto two levels’.¹⁵ These two levels concern, first, the comprehension of ‘inner experience’ and, second, the insight into the transcendental nature of consciousness.

There is a further advantage of the way through psychology. Here, the *epoché* concerns not only my soul, but ‘all souls’¹⁶ such that after the *epoché*, there is ‘not a multiplicity of separated souls, each reduced to its pure interiority’ but a ‘total framework of all souls’.¹⁷ Unfortunately, Husserl does not explain more specifically how this process shall be possible and how this ‘total framework of all souls’ relates to the idea that it is first and foremost me who has to carry out the *epoché*. Another difficulty of this way consists in the fact that phenomenological psychology, as psychology, is always an individual or partial science. If transcendental phenomenology is now identified with pure psychology, as it is the case at least in the *Crisis*, it remains incomprehensible how such an individual science, albeit pure and radicalized, could fulfil phenomenology’s task of being a universal science.¹⁸

The shortcomings of the way through psychology also become obvious when comparing it to the ontological way. The ontological way takes various shapes and forms; it can depart from a critique of formal logic,¹⁹ from a critique of the positive sciences, or from an ontology of the lifeworld. The

critique of the positive individual sciences means that so-called regional ontologies serve as point of departure, that is, ontologies which concern a specific region of being or a specific region of the lifeworld. The ontology of the lifeworld, in contrast, has to relate to the whole of the world and investigate its structures. Husserl states that the task of a lifeworld ontology concerns undertaking a ‘concretely general doctrine of essences’ of all beings in the lifeworld.²⁰

If an individual science is taken as point of departure, this science can function only as a leading clue (*Leitfaden*). The critique of an individual science can provide insights into the necessity of phenomenology such that the universal *epoché* is motivated. Yet another difficulty of the way through psychology emerges at this point. If the insights of the ontological way are taken seriously, it becomes obvious that psychology as a positive science cannot lead to transcendental phenomenology in a straightforward fashion. Psychology has to be elucidated in its nature as a positive science, by way of radical criticism. However, if such a critique happens, and if psychology functions merely as a leading clue, then we are ultimately concerned with a version of the ontological way. The ontological way thus proves to be the more fundamental and encompassing one.

All positive or objective sciences show a lack, according to Husserl, which causes the current crisis of the sciences. This lack consists in forgetting subjectivity as a dimension which cannot be ignored. The relation to subjectivity is that which ‘could procure meaning and validity for the theoretical constructs of objective knowledge and [which] thus first gives them the dignity of a knowledge which is ultimately grounded’.²¹ Because they forget about this ground, the sciences remain ‘on the “plane”’ and disregard the ‘infinitely richer dimension of depth’.²²

The image of the plane with its hidden depth dimension shows a crucial strength of the ontological way in comparison to the Cartesian procedure. The ontological way departs from the richness of the world and encounters subjectivity as a fundamental yet ignored dimension. Consciousness thus does not emerge here as ‘residual’ or as that which remains when everything dubitable has been eliminated, but as that which comes to the fore when phenomenology thoroughly questions what is given, thereby inquiring more and more deeply into it.

Husserl characterizes this procedure as a reversal of the Cartesian approach since the lifeworld is now the beginning and point of departure for the analysis.²³ This reversal of procedure illuminates how the ontological way involves the intersubjective dimension more successfully. The objectivity of the world is questioned rather than being excluded (in order to then be newly established on a secure basis). Husserl sums this up quite concisely when he states that ‘the point is not to secure objectivity but to understand it’.²⁴ This also means

that intersubjectivity is always already in play and remains in play; objectivity presupposes the possibility of communicating with others about what is given.

The ontological way includes the universal *epoché* as an essential moment. But the *epoché* is now better prepared for and motivated, and its sense becomes clearer. At stake is a ‘total change of the natural attitude’²⁵ which allows us to question the world’s depth dimension. The given is examined regarding its modes of givenness; it is considered as a correlate of the subjectivity which constitutes it. Since we are deeply engrained in the attitude of the positive sciences, it proves extremely difficult to take on and maintain the new attitude. The phenomenological attitude is thus an attitude of continuous tension which has to examine itself, the natural attitude and the relation of both. The point cannot be to abandon the natural attitude, but to examine it and reveal its depth dimension, that is, transcendental subjectivity. The danger is falling back into the attitude of the positive sciences and wanting to explain transcendental subjectivity in this way. Phenomenology has to watch this danger; this watchfulness is part of the universal *epoché*.²⁶

HUSSERL’S HISTORICAL PHENOMENOLOGY

After the discussion of the two pathways suggested in Husserl’s *Crisis*, it may first appear surprising and peculiar that Rudolf Boehm, in his ‘Introduction’ to the second part of the lecture course *First Philosophy*, distinguishes among several ways and does not want to commit to a definite number.²⁷ Yet upon closer consideration, it turns out that Husserl, in the supplementary texts to *First Philosophy*, indeed names several ways which partly are combinations of elements from the three previously ways, and which partly seem to fall outside of this systematic. At the same time, the ontological way, as we will see later, is by no means just *one* way, but encompasses several variations. With this plurality in mind, it is still justified to speak of the ‘ontological way’ since there are certain characteristic features which the different ways summarized under this heading share.

In this section, I shall argue that there is also a type of pathway which could be called historical or idea-historical (*ideengeschichtlich*);²⁸ this pathway can take on different forms which, however, share certain features. Husserl designates the first part of the lecture course *First Philosophy* as an ‘idea-historical introduction to phenomenological philosophy’,²⁹ and in the ‘Introduction’ to the first two parts of the *Crisis* as they were originally published in the journal *Philosophia*, Husserl announces that the ‘teleological-historical reflections’ undertaken in these texts belong to an ‘independent introduction to transcendental phenomenology’.³⁰ The historical way is closer to the ontological way than to the other ways, as we will see; nevertheless they are not identical.

A preliminary argument for the non-identity lies in the fact that historical reflections can disclose the necessity of transcendental-phenomenological analyses without involving an ontology of the lifeworld or regional ontologies. In turn, it would be possible to engage in the project of a lifeworld ontology by examining merely the structures of the lifeworld, without reflecting on the historicity of the lifeworld. A lifeworld ontology of this kind would be static and thus not involve genetic, let alone historical phenomenology. To be sure, the project of a lifeworld ontology, when consistently pursued to the end, will have to involve questions of temporality and even history; yet this does not create a contradiction. Static phenomenology leads beyond itself, but Husserl nevertheless considers the pathways developed in his earlier philosophy to be complete in themselves.³¹

The fact that static phenomenology, when consistently pursued, points to its own shortcomings (and that even a genetic phenomenology leads beyond itself) can serve as an indication that phenomenology in some sense necessarily leads to historical reflections. The two most important, interconnected aspects which point to the significance of history are temporality (and, related to that, the development of genetic phenomenology) and intersubjectivity.³²

The Cartesian way which has already been discussed in Chapter 1 regarding its strengths and weaknesses is not a pathway in the strict sense since it is lacking a continuous development. Rather, the Cartesian procedure emphasizes how the transition is a discontinuous leap. In a 1937 manuscript which serves as a critique of *Ideas I*, Husserl describes the project of philosophically examining the lifeworld:

We will see that the lifeworld (taken omnitemporally) is nothing but the historical world. From here, it becomes obvious that a complete and systematic introduction to phenomenology begins as a universal historical problem, and has to be carried out as such. If the *epoché* is introduced without the historical dimension, then the problem of the lifeworld or of universal history will follow later. The introduction undertaken in *Ideas* keeps its rightful place, but I consider the historical way now as closer to the principles and more systematic.³³

There are admittedly only few passages where Husserl explicitly mentions an historical way, but in this passage, he makes a strong case for this approach. How is the historical way to be conceived? Just like the ontological way, the historical way can take different forms, yet certain elements are present in all of them; hence it is justified to speak of an historical way. Essentially, there are three versions of the historical way:

- a) Historical reflections, as Husserl undertakes them in *First Philosophy* and the *Crisis*, always belong to the historical way. Moreover, in both of these works, Husserl obviously considers historical reflections as necessary for

an introduction to transcendental phenomenology. Yet in both works, he complements them through a systematic part, such that the way through psychology (*First Philosophy*) or the way through psychology and the ontological way as options (*Crisis*) follow upon the historical reflections. David Carr shows that according to Husserl, the historical reflections need to precede or accompany each of the two systematic ways in the *Crisis*; however, for Carr, the historical way does present an independent alternative.³⁴ In the current chapter, the possibility of an historical way shall be shown, as one *possible* way (in different forms) among others. Husserl always held on to the possibility of different possible ways, it seems; even the Cartesian way is still possible for him, although it has to lead into historical reflections later on, as the preceding citation shows. It thus seems more in line with Husserl's philosophy to explore the possibility of an historical way than to show the necessity of historical reflections prior to a systematic part. Historical reflections can lead into the way through psychology or into an ontological way, or they can be continued by way of historical reflections which would then also arrive at transcendental phenomenology.

- b) The historical sciences can serve as a leading clue on the way to transcendental phenomenology. A critique of the historical sciences would yield the insight that a phenomenological analysis of history is necessary since it turns out that an external examination of historical events is possible yet does not do justice to them. In order to understand history, the underlying subjectivity which gives to history its inner connection needs to be considered.³⁵ In a certain sense, such a critique would be a version of the ontological way since it involves the critique of a positive science. However, I argue that the critique of the historical sciences is not simply a version of the ontological way. First, a rather special science which is not focused on a specific region of the lifeworld is concerned. Second, such a critique would be accompanied by historical reflections,³⁶ and ontology does not play a role in it.
- c) The project of developing an ontology of the lifeworld can be carried out as developing an ontology of the historical lifeworld; upon closer consideration, it turns out that the 'lifeworld is nothing but the historical world'.³⁷ In this variation, the historical way would indeed be a version of ontological way; but this is just one of at least three different shapes which the historical way might take.

These three forms of the historical way can be combined with each other or be pursued separately. What are the shared features of the three forms which would justify the common name? It is common to all three that we start from the current historical situation in which we experience a crisis. At this point,

a major advantage of the historical way immediately comes to the fore: We receive a response to the question as to why we would philosophize. The experience of crisis can motivate us to undertake historical reflections. These reflections lead to the primordially instituted sense of philosophy in the Greek world, namely, undertaking philosophy as a universal science which strives to question all presuppositions. The historical reflections show, furthermore, that philosophy has owned up to this primordially instituted sense, and transcendental phenomenology strives to go back to this sense, aiming to illuminate the historical misunderstandings.

This movement shall now be presented in some detail to show that Husserl is not offering empty claims. Naturally, the question about our history can only emerge from the question, where do we find ourselves today? Husserl answers this question by stating that our present experience is that of a crisis, namely, a crisis of the sciences. We experience this crisis because we come to realize that science provides no answers to those questions that concern exactly who we are as human beings. Science consciously abandons any questions that deal with the subject in order to achieve an objective account of the world. However, the crisis is not only a crisis of the sciences, for in our present time, sciences determine our existence as a whole. The sciences tell us who we are or, as Husserl tersely remarks, ‘merely fact-minded sciences make merely fact-minded people’.³⁸ As for philosophy, this crisis becomes apparent in the ‘splintering’ of philosophy and in its ‘perplexed activity’.³⁹

The origins of this crisis are discovered in the turn towards history; we have to reflect on the emergence of philosophy and science and on the meaning they had in their emergence, their ‘primordial institution’. According to Husserl, the ancient Greeks originally understood philosophy and science to be united and believed them to be a single universal science that was justified absolutely. This is precisely the sense Husserl wishes to capture in his phenomenological philosophy. It is Husserl’s thesis that philosophy has not remained true to its primordial institution, and the meaning of philosophy has been concealed by a certain privileging of the search for objectivity. Historical reflection thus intends both to disclose the original meaning of philosophy and to discover why philosophy has been led astray.

For Husserl, the central reason why the modern sciences have failed is to be found in their style of objectivism. Modern scientific objectivism forgets that science is always an accomplishment of subjectivity. In their ‘forgetfulness of the lifeworld’, the sciences fail to recognize that the everyday lifeworld is the very foundation of the meaning of science and that the results of sciences always flow back into the lifeworld. It is therefore necessary to reflect upon the very nature of subjectivity and to describe *how* science emerges from this subjectivity, that is, *how* it is constituted; this is precisely the question of transcendental phenomenology.⁴⁰

A 'historical, backward reflection (*Rückbesinnung*) of the sort under discussion here' is the 'deepest kind of self-reflection', aiming at an understanding of who I am; for I am a 'historical being'.⁴¹ Hence such reflections inevitably turn into historical reflections, no matter what the starting point was. If I initially focus on history in the genuine sense, that is, on communal history, the experience of crisis will lead me to historical reflections, to a diagnosis of the forgetfulness of the subjective-relative lifeworld, and finally to an investigation of transcendental subjectivity as intersubjectivity. Yet even if I am not interested in communal history at first and 'only' want to know who I am, I still need to realize that I am an historical being and, as such, cannot understand myself unless I turn back to history as going beyond the history of my life. This is the circle of historical reflection and self-reflection in which we find ourselves; in it, we recognize ourselves as historical beings, accountable for our actions and goals.

What shape does the historical reflection take? This can be seen concretely in the analyses of the lecture course *First Philosophy* and in the *Crisis*;⁴² at the same time, a 1921 manuscript⁴³ discusses the features of phenomenological historical reflections more generally. In this manuscript, Husserl differentiates between historical reflections in the phenomenological sense and historical reflections as undertaken by the traditional historical sciences. The essential difference between these two comes to the fore when Husserl designates his reflections as 'idea-historical' (*ideengeschichtlich*) where 'ideas' contrast with 'facts' (*Tatsachen*). The objective sciences regard the world as a 'fact which contains order yet no sense'.⁴⁴ Historical events in their succession certainly allow for an external examination; yet the philosophical task is an analysis of the inner connection or unity, with respect to the sense which underlies the process of becoming.⁴⁵ Even though history naturally exceeds our powers, this does not mean that it is a blind succession of events. History contains goals and intentions which are being fulfilled or left unfulfilled; history rests on such inner connections.

Husserl presents similar considerations in the *Crisis*. When philosophy takes up history as a theme, 'it is a matter of the "meaning" or reason in history', and these issues naturally 'surpass the world understood as the universe of mere facts'.⁴⁶ The reflections of the *Crisis* are thus not historical reflections in the traditional or common sense, but aim to elucidate the 'teleology'⁴⁷ operative in historical becoming.⁴⁸ An idea-historical introduction concentrates on the intentions and goals which provide history with internal unity and connectedness. To be sure, these goals can be modified, and new goals can emerge; concerning the primordially instituted sense of philosophy, for example, Husserl distinguishes between the absolute primordial institution in the Greek world and the relative institution in Descartes.⁴⁹

There are some definite advantages to the historical way as conceived by Husserl. The historical way is a way in the emphatic sense; it has an extension, and we enter onto this way as we participate in historical reflections. There is thus no sudden, unmotivated change of attitude required. In the case of the Cartesian way, in contrast, the question of motivation remains entirely open. It is being presupposed that we have the goal of an absolute science, but why would this presupposition hold true for natural consciousness? The historical way can speak to natural consciousness because it begins with our current historical situation of crisis and poses questions to understand this crisis better: How did we arrive at the place we are in today?

Similar to the ontological way which bears the essential advantage over the Cartesian way that it departs from the fullness or plenitude of the world and not from a seemingly empty consciousness, the historical way also begins with a kind of plenitude. This plenitude is found in our historical situation as heirs of the past. The concept of heritage plays an important role in the *Crisis*; already in the first part, Husserl mentions that philosophers are ‘heirs of the past’,⁵⁰ and later on, he mentions the ‘spiritual heritage’ which motivates our tasks and questions. According to Husserl, philosophers are ‘functionaries of mankind’⁵¹ since they take on responsibility for themselves and others by way of radical questioning. This responsibility requires that philosophers become aware of themselves as heirs of the past and radically question this heritage.⁵²

If we question the heritage of philosophy, the sense is disclosed with which philosophy was instituted, and it turns out that philosophy never truly fulfilled this sense. The goal of universality, for example, points to the task of an ontology of the lifeworld. The question concerning the in-itself being of the world has always been posed and was never clarified in a satisfying fashion; these problems motivate an *epoché* as it was first envisioned by the ancient sceptics and as it should now finally be pursued in a consistent way by phenomenology. Furthermore, the paradoxes which emerge from confusing the empirical and the transcendental ego call for an examination of this distinction through transcendental phenomenology. These are just some of many open questions and problems.

If transcendental phenomenology wants to take our historicity seriously, it has to reconsider its self-definition as a science. On the one hand, there is a change in the status of the subjectivity which is being examined. We ourselves as philosophizing subjects are historically situated; we cannot raise ourselves above the world and take a firm standpoint there.⁵³ In this sense, Husserl’s formulation is misleading when he states that after undertaking the *epoché*, we find ourselves *above* the world⁵⁴ since it implies the possibility of taking a standpoint outside of the world as historically becoming. On the other hand, the character of knowledge is modified: ‘A history which could

judge in a supra-temporal, final fashion ‘how it really was’ is an impossibility in principle’.⁵⁵ Since the historical world contains no clues towards a world of final truths beyond it, the historical world can be designated as a ‘true pure phenomenon’ in the phenomenological sense.⁵⁶

When Husserl, in a text supplementary to the *Crisis*, mentions the ‘fiction (*Dichtung*) of the history of philosophy’ which changes again and again, two points need to be remembered. First, Husserl always tries in this fiction to understand “‘the” philosophy as a unified *telos*’.⁵⁷ Rather than proclaiming arbitrariness, Husserl acknowledges that philosophy’s *telos* changes and presents itself differently. Second, Husserl admits that we are dependent on ‘fiction’ in order to understand the past. There is no ‘how it really was’ outside of that which is handed down to us; we need to interpret the pieces of ‘fiction’, relate them to each other and question them regarding their inner truth.⁵⁸

As we hear and read ‘fiction’ of various kinds, we gain access to others which are not our contemporaries. When Husserl’s theory of intersubjectivity was based on the concept of empathy, intersubjectivity was restricted to my contemporaries. Husserl’s turn to history means that language and speech acquire more significance. Intersubjectivity is now described as extending ‘through the open chain of generations’;⁵⁹ this is possible only because ‘linguistic communication is always involved in shaping the experiential sense of the world’.⁶⁰ We need linguistic statements, and more precisely, scientific statements, to know what science is ‘aiming at’⁶¹ or for understanding the primordially instituted sense of philosophy and science.

Husserl states that the Greek primordial institution is the ‘*teleological beginning*, the true beginning of the European spirit as such’.⁶² This statement shows the proximity between Hegel and Husserl – not just because Husserl speaks of the European spirit, but also because he designates the beginning of the history of philosophy and science as a ‘birth’. We have seen that for Husserl as for Hegel, there are important parallels between the ‘history’ of an individual and history in the genuine sense, that is, communal history, extending through the generations.

NOTES

1. Karl Löwith, *Von Hegel zu Nietzsche: Der revolutionäre Bruch im Denken des 19. Jahrhunderts* (*From Hegel to Nietzsche: the Revolutionary Break in 19th Century Thought*) (Hamburg: Fischer, 1969), 2ff. To be sure, there were successors and contemporaries of Hegel who introduced the topic of history into philosophy, such as Kant, Fichte and Schelling; yet they do not make thought about history central to their philosophy, and they do not examine and determine the role of history for philosophy. See also Stephen Houlgate, *Hegel’s ‘Phenomenology of Spirit’. A Reader’s Guide* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012).

2. Hegel, HiPhi I, 51/32
3. Ibid.
4. Hegel, HiPhi I, 52/32.
5. Hegel, HiPhi I, 29.
6. Hegel, HiPhi I, 30.
7. Hegel, Enc. I, § 14.
8. Hegel, HiPhi I, 49/30.
9. Hegel, HiPhi I, 21.
10. Ibid.
11. See Rudolf Bernet, Iso Kern and Eduard Marbach, *An Introduction to Husserlian Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1993) and Iso Kern, *Husserl und Kant. Eine Untersuchung über Husserls Verhältnis zu Kant und zum Neukantianismus* (*Husserl and Kant. A Study of Husserl's Relation to Kant and Neokantianism*) (The Hague: Kluwer, 1964). Kern investigates in detail which pathways are taken in Husserl's different texts. It becomes obvious that one and the same text often contains different pathways which are combined or taken one after the other. I disagree with Kern's statement that the Cartesian way is proposed 'in its purest form' in the lecture course *First Philosophy* (Kern, *Husserl und Kant*, 201). Rather, it seems to me that the purest form of the Cartesian way can be found in *Ideas I* where no alternatives to this way exist. In *Ideas I*, the conditions of the new science are mentioned on the first page already, and the Cartesian way is pursued in an exemplary fashion in the 'Considerations Fundamental to Phenomenology'. In *First Philosophy*, in contrast, the Cartesian elements only occur around the 32nd lecture and are preceded by a historical pathway; later on, a way through psychology is suggested.
12. Husserl, Hua IX, 277.
13. Husserl, Hua IX, 295f.
14. Cf. Husserl's rigorous presentation in the *Crisis*: 'A pure psychology as positive science ... does not exist. ... Thus pure psychology in itself is identical with transcendent philosophy as the science of transcendental subjectivity. This is unassailable' (Husserl, Hua VI, 261/257).
15. Husserl, Hua IX, 296.
16. Husserl, Hua VI, 252/256.
17. Husserl, Hua VI, 255/258.
18. Kern, *Husserl und Kant*, 217; Kern also explains how Husserl, in his *Encyclopaedia Britannica* article, did not equate pure psychology and transcendental phenomenology, yet nevertheless did not resolve the problems of the way into transcendental phenomenology through psychology. See also John Drummond, 'Husserl on the Ways to the Performance of the Reduction', *Man and World*, 8 (1975): 47–69.
19. See Husserl's *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (Hua XVII).
20. Husserl, Hua VI, 142/145.
21. Husserl, Hua VI, 121/119.
22. Husserl, Hua VI, 121f./119.
23. Husserl, Hua VI, 175/169.
24. Husserl, Hua VI, 193/189.
25. Husserl, Hua VI, 151/148.

26. Kern, *Husserl und Kant*, 220. Kern provides a succinct summary of the ontological way in distinction from the other ways: 'The *epoché* concerning the positive validities happens thus not because this validity is lacking in apodicticity (as the Cartesian way) nor because I am *only* interested in the subjective and uninterested in the being of the world (as the way through psychology) but because I see that it is contradictory to want to 'explain' the transcendental life by way of positive attribution of being'.

27. Hua VIII, 'Editor's Introduction'. Boehm states quite clearly with respect to the supplementary texts of Volume VIII: 'It is certainly not the case that each of the texts printed here represented one of a totality of eight possible 'pathways'. But even the 'exact number' of the pathways cannot be given, not each of them can be ... designated by a name, and a construction or reconstruction of a 'systematic' of the different pathways is difficult, if not impossible' (Boehm in Husserl, Hua VIII, 206).

28. Kern states in a footnote that the idea-historical introduction might form a fourth type of pathway (Bernet, Marbach, Kern, *Husserlian Phenomenology*, 63, fn. 15).

29. Husserl, Hua VIII, 3.

30. Husserl, Hua VI, xiv fn. 3.

31. This is confirmed by Husserl's comments in Hua VIII (259 ff.) where the Cartesian way is still presented as a possibility, as well as by the 'Postscript to *Ideas I*' written in 1930: 'In my thinking over the years, I have taken several equally possible pathways' (Hua V, 148). In the *Crisis*, Husserl makes a similar statement: 'All this will be confirmed as I now ... attempt to show, to those willing to understand, one of the paths I have actually taken; as a path already taken, it offers itself as one that can at any time be taken again' (Hua VI, 123/120). This formulation sounds somewhat naïve since it does not necessarily follow that we can indeed follow Husserl on any path that he himself has taken. Furthermore, an unfortunate presentation of the pathway as we find it in certain passages of *Ideas I* which are partly criticized by Husserl himself later on might obscure the traces of the way taken by Husserl.

32. David Carr, *Phenomenology and the Problem of History* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 68.

33. Hua XXIX, 426. Since this is a crucial passage, I will also provide the German text: 'Wir werden sehen, daß diese Lebenswelt (allzeitlich genommen) nichts anderes ist als die historische Welt. Es ist von da aus fühlbar, daß eine vollständige systematische Einleitung, die in die Phänomenologie [einführt], als ein universales historisches Problem anfängt und durchzuführen ist. Wenn man die Epoché einführt ohne die geschichtliche Thematik, so kommt das Problem der Lebenswelt bzw. der universalen Geschichte hinten nach. Die Einleitung der *Ideen* behält zwar ihr Recht, aber ich halte den geschichtlichen Weg jetzt für prinzipieller und systematischer'.

34. Carr, *Problem of History*, 66. Although this formulation implies that there is no independent historical pathway, the statement made by Carr includes a strong claim (which would, from a certain perspective, be stronger than the one proposed by me): Carr presents historical reflections as a necessary component of the other ways. Accordingly, historical reflections would not present an independent, *possible* way, but rather a non-independent, yet *necessary* component.

35. Husserl, Hua VIII, 238ff.
36. This is the case, for example, in the lectures on *First Philosophy* which are accompanied by a text called 'The insufficient nature of the positive sciences and First Philosophy' (*Das Unzureichende der positiven Wissenschaften und Erste Philosophie*) (Hua VIII, 229ff.) in which Husserl critically examines the historical sciences.
37. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 426.
38. Husserl, Hua VI, 4/6.
39. Husserl, Hua I, 46/4.
40. Husserl, Hua VIII, 356.
41. Husserl, Hua VI, 73/72.
42. An example would be the section on Galileo and idealization as examined in Chapter 3 of this book.
43. Husserl, Hua VIII, 238ff.
44. Husserl, Hua VIII, 230.
45. Husserl, Hua VIII, 238f.
46. Husserl, Hua VI, 7/9.
47. Husserl's concept of teleology is discussed in Chapter 9.
48. Husserl, Hua VI, 71/70.
49. Husserl, Hua XXIX, n. 33.
50. Husserl, Hua VI, 16/17.
51. *ibid.*
52. It would be interesting to examine the concepts of heritage in Husserl and in Heidegger. Heidegger investigates heritage in the sections on historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*) in *Being and Time*. In this context, Heidegger indirectly puts forth the (indirect) claim that '(what if) everything "good" is a heritage' (BT, 383/435).
53. Husserl, Hua VI, 196/193.
54. Such formulations can still be found in the *Crisis*: Husserl, Hua VI, 155/152.
55. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 233.
56. Rudolf Boehm, *Vom Gesichtspunkt der Phänomenologie. Husserl-Studien (From the Perspective of Phenomenology. Husserl Studies)* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1968), 248f.
57. Husserl, Hua VI, 513.
58. Investigating the relation between *Geschichte* as 'history' and as 'story' or 'narrative', David Carr maintains that our experience of history already has a narrative character. Since our life is structured by goals and intentions which are being fulfilled, dismissed or modified, there are beginnings and ends also in our lives; this holds for individual as well as communal life. Carr also provides a response to the objection that there have been peoples without historical tales and without a documented interest in their history. In accordance with our lifeworldly experience of time, Carr distinguishes between two ways of existing temporally: a linear, teleological, narrative, historical mode of existence, and a cyclical mode, repeated by way of rituals (David Carr, 'Phenomenology and Historical Knowledge'. *Phänomenologische Forschungen – Sonderband: Interkulturalität*, 1998: 112–130). If we assume that these two ways of experiencing time do not need to be strictly separated but might even work together, the distinction might help us to understand how a teleological conception of history does not necessarily need to be purely linear. According to Husserl, the primordial

institution becomes revealed only in the final institution (Husserl, Hua VI, 74/73), and Hegel repeatedly turns to the image of the circle in explaining his teleological understanding of history.

59. Husserl, Hua XV, 219.

60. Husserl, Hua XV, 220.

61. Husserl, Hua XV, 221.

62. Husserl, Hua VI, 72/71.

Chapter 9

Phenomenology of Historical Worlds: Possibilities and Problems

History itself establishes the possibility of its own appearing.

Derrida, *Husserl's Origin*, 66¹

Why is it important to develop a phenomenology of historical worlds? Given the changing and complex nature of historical worlds, it might be more obvious why such a phenomenology is more difficult than why it is significant. Let me therefore address its advantages before responding to some of the difficulties. Phenomenology is characterized by its descriptive nature. It does not prescribe how things ought to be but describes how things are. This is consistent with phenomenology's starting point as both Hegel and Husserl characterize it: Phenomenology should strive for a presuppositionless beginning, should aim to make as few presuppositions as possible and should carefully examine everything that could prove an implicit assumption.

Such an approach might initially appear restrictive when it comes to historical worlds since 'mere' description would not seem to allow for critique. Yet a critical approach tends to involve presuppositions, and our current perspective on the world makes us more than ever susceptible to taking certain political frameworks for granted, such as democracy. But the political realm is itself peculiar. If we look more closely, we might well find that we neither fully understand the current political scenery nor the current economic crisis, nor the relationship between them. We could, however, learn from Hegel that politics ('the state') and economics ('civil society') are different realms, and having allowed for their inextricable intertwinement might be an important factor contributing to our current crisis.

The fact that there is a crisis is barely debatable, and in that sense, starting with a description of the crisis of our historical world would seem the best way of not violating the phenomenological principle of presuppositionless

beginnings. The strongest objections to there being a crisis might be these two questions: (1) Have there not always been crises? and (2) has there not been so much progress that any talk of a crisis is just an unwarranted historical pessimism? In both respects, Hegel and Husserl will be our best candidates for discussing the issue. Husserl will allow us to describe how there has in a certain sense indeed always been a crisis; yet this allows us to see the current crisis in relationship to the origin of crisis (in ancient Greece) and allows us to trace different manifestations of crisis in different historical worlds. The second question takes us to what seems the most important difference between Hegel and Husserl: Hegel notoriously describes a history of progress, and Husserl a history of crisis. In order to see the extent to which this is true, we need to examine what unites, and then again separates them: the idea of goal-directedness or teleology in history which they both hold, yet in different ways.

A phenomenology of the historical world, if successful, could thus provide us with a descriptive account of our historical world that does not pre-decide how world should be organized at the political, economic, or cultural level. Yet in order for such a phenomenology to be successful, a plausible perspective on history is needed that is not limited to a mere succession of contingencies, but allows us to explore connections. Teleology is what emerges from describing these connections, and according to both Hegel and Husserl, it is justified because history is (at least partly) shaped by human beings who act on reasons – but who can also be mistaken or manipulated. The thesis of the current chapter is that Hegel's phenomenology radicalizes Hegel's in such a way that a plausible account of history as teleology emerges, yet in such a way that history does not need to have one set goal from the beginning. Moreover, Husserl's phenomenology allows for a plurality of historical worlds; it does not need to settle on an account of progress, and it allows us to explore crises. Finally, on the issue of critique, a Husserlian response would be that understanding crisis in its origins and different historical manifestations is a necessary first step towards addressing it. What to do beyond such attempts at a better understanding in any case cannot be prescribed.

HEGEL AND THE COMPLETION OF HISTORY

It is by no means a new accusation against Hegel that his philosophy lacks a dimension of critique concerning the historical situation and is thus conservative in the literal sense of preserving the current condition. Already because of its popularity, this criticism needs to be treated with care. At the same time, the accusation appears to have a certain justification, especially since such criticism has not only been uttered in general but also on the basis

of a thorough knowledge of Hegel's philosophy.² A very explicit passage in which Hegel confirms that he does not want to state what 'ought to' happen can be found in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right*:

This treatise, therefore, in so far as it deals with political science, shall be nothing other than an attempt *to comprehend and portray the state as an inherently rational entity*. As a philosophical composition, it must distance itself as far as possible from the obligation to construct a *state as it ought to be*; such instruction (*Belehrung*) as it may contain cannot be aimed at instructing the state on how it ought to be, but rather at showing how the state, as the ethical universe, should be recognized. ... To comprehend *what is* is the task of philosophy, for *what is* is reason. As far as the individual is concerned, each individual is in any case a child of his time; thus philosophy, too, is *its own time comprehended in thoughts*.³

This passage is so unequivocal that it hardly needs an interpretation. Hegel's refusal to give a presentation of the state 'as it should be' appears to be motivated by the danger that such a presentation would enter into arbitrary speculation. If theorists lose sight of how the state *is*, they also lose sight of reality – and it cannot be our task to 'construct' an ideal state. Yet it also cannot be our task to merely observe what the case is but to examine how the state 'should be recognized'. This statement implies that there are various possibilities to do so, and the way in which the recognizing takes place influences what is being recognized. When we look at the state rationally, we will also find a reason in it. Moreover, the reality is so rich that it can tell us a lot if we only know how to read it. Reality itself can tell us what we *should* do, that is, what we should do in the face of this reality (rather than in empty space, so to speak).

Even though Hegel never literally speaks of an 'end of history', there are many passages in his work which show that he regarded his time as the completion of history. This is particularly obvious in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* when Hegel says that the 'ultimate result' of the process of world history has become realized in the present.⁴ Spirit has become present in reality, which becomes apparent at an external level in the fact that state and church are co-equal. When compared to the life history of a human being, Hegel explains, the Germanic world corresponds to the 'old age' (*Greisenalter*); yet in contrast to the individual's old age as a time of weakness, the old age of Spirit signifies its 'perfect maturity and strength'.⁵ Hegel cautions us to avoid hasty parallels, and it would be hasty to conclude from the designation 'old age' that this age will be followed by Spirit's death. And yet, if the goal of world history has been realized, what else should follow? On the basis of a teleological conception of history, how could there be a next step after the goal has been reached?

A further argument to show that Hegel indeed assumed that history could be completed lies in the parallel between world history and system of logic: History is a system in its development.⁶ Spirit externalizes itself into space and time; its externalization into space is nature, and its externalization into time is history.⁷ If the development of Spirit runs parallel to the levels of actual history and if this development can be presented in a highly complex, yet accessible system, the question about a possible end of history indeed becomes pressing. Of course, such an end would not mean that nothing would happen in the future, but it is implied that nothing essentially new would happen anymore, that is, nothing which had not already been treated at one point of the system or the other. Concerning the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, this means that all essential shapes of consciousness have been dealt with. They can be repeated, and they might even be repeated in a modified form. But to the extent that Spirit reached itself in the end, there is no motivation to pass from the shape of absolute knowing to a fundamentally new shape.

The idea of such an end does not mean for time to stop. However, whether a development which does not allow for anything truly new can be called history is a difficult question. Not only would it be arrogant to state how the world will need to be, but 'the insight to which philosophy should lead us is that the actual world is as it should be'.⁸ This is the case because God has accomplished the world and has come to reign: 'God reigns over the world; the content of his government, the fulfillment of his plan is world history'.⁹ God's government of the world has two implications. It means that nothing is lacking; there is nothing we should – and could – hope and wait for. Furthermore, it means that time has been annulled and that time and eternity have been reconciled.

Spirit belongs to eternity.¹⁰ What is meant here by eternity? For Hegel, eternity is not the negation of time; that would be bad eternity since it remains dependent on time. This theme is connected to the distinction between the 'bad' and the 'good' infinite. The bad infinite is defined in opposition to the finite and hence is determined by and dependent on it. If infinity is supposed to be true infinity, nothing can be opposed to it. As a result, Hegel rejects infinite progress because it remains related to finitude. Infinite progress is merely the negation of finitude; it means to go beyond the limit again and again.

The image of infinite progress is the 'the straight line, with the infinite on both ends'.¹¹ Its problematic nature becomes obvious when imagining this line. We can imagine only a finite line; thus, with respect to both end ends, the question arises as to how to continue. The line continues just in the same fashion. The limits, the endpoints of the line, are being surpassed again and again, yet only to reach new endpoints which need to be surpassed. In contrast, the image of true infinity is the circle, 'the line that has reached itself, that has closed and entirely present, without beginning point and end'.¹²

Eternity is the ‘absolute present’¹³ which will not be, but *is*. Spirit is eternal; that is, ‘it is not over, and neither is it not yet, but is essentially now’¹⁴ – as the present Spirit which encompasses all earlier levels. The concept of absolute present evokes an association with the ‘living present’ (*lebendige Gegenwart*) in Husserl. Both philosophers are thinkers of the present.

OPEN TELEOLOGY IN HUSSERL

Husserl also considers history to be determined by an inherent teleological directedness; in characterizing this directedness, his formulations are strikingly similar to those of Hegel. Yet in contrast to Hegel, Husserl emphasizes the openness of history. The *telos* is an idea of absolute perfection lying in infinity.

In this chapter, I will first briefly present Husserl’s ideas regarding the teleological character of history. Afterward, the accusation that Husserl’s conception of history entails an image of the future which does not do justice to the nature of the future will be examined, first on the level of inner time consciousness, then on the level of history. Concerning both levels, I shall argue that Husserl’s phenomenology provides the possibility to account for the phenomenon of the future in a satisfying fashion. However, Husserl sometimes goes beyond the frame of his own philosophy and overemphasizes the way in which the future can be planned, rather than acknowledging how the future not only crosses out our plans, but comes towards us as that which we truly did not expect.

If the horizontality of all experience is taken seriously, the strength of Husserl’s philosophy emerges as that of a ‘working philosophy’ (*Arbeitsphilosophie*) which he did not want to end, but to begin. On the level of history, horizontality comes to manifest itself as the relation between homeworlds and alienworlds. Husserl’s philosophy thereby acquires a fundamental ethical dimension which prevents his conception of history from sliding into a mere relativism.

‘The teleology which is now our topic as an ownmost feature of philosophy’s history certainly designates nothing less than some kind of a metaphysical substruct (*Substruktion*), no matter how this substruct would be presented’ – Thus runs Husserl’s opening sentence for a manuscript on teleology in the history of philosophy from the texts supplementing the *Crisis*.¹⁵ For Husserl, teleology designates an inner sense, a tendency which shows ‘what, through all these philosophers, “the point of it” ultimately was’.¹⁶ Is Husserl thus concerned only with the history of philosophy, not with the history of mankind as a whole? Is teleology at work only in the history of philosophy? The fact that Husserl speaks of the ‘crisis of European sciences’

or, as the title of the original Vienna lecture has it, the ‘crisis of European mankind’, shows that Husserl is not merely concerned with the history of philosophy. Philosophers are ‘functionaries of mankind’;¹⁷ their ideas are supposed to have a guiding function, and in that sense, their reflections show what ‘the point of it’ was. Yet in contrast to Hegel, Husserl does not really thematize the relation between the history of philosophy and the history of mankind.¹⁸

When relating Husserl’s conception of the present to Hegel’s, an objection arises concerning Husserl’s thesis of a teleological directedness of history: Husserl does not consider his times as a period of completion, but as a situation of crisis. How can a teleological development yield crisis? Such a crisis can occur if the philosophers did not truly realize what ‘the point of it’ is, that is, if they interpreted the primordially instituted sense (*Urstiftungssinn*) in a one-sided fashion. What justifies designating the development as teleological is the primordially instituted sense which was given to philosophy and the sciences in ancient Greece. This sense has become modified or re-instituted during the course of history; it is not a static sense, but an historical sense, keeping its unity as it undergoes modification. The primordially instituted sense has become blurred, misdirected and misunderstood in various ways during the course of history. While the goal originally was to gain reliable insight into being as a whole, there has been an emphasis on objective knowledge, ignoring the subject-relativity of all knowing and its grounds in the lifeworld. This misunderstanding is thus ultimately not a function of the philosophers’ blindness, but stems from an ambiguity in the primordially instituted sense itself.

Husserl states that the ‘end of the development is rather a beginning’, namely, a beginning of the ‘infinite task for the open infinity of future scholar generations’.¹⁹ Although Hegel also considers the end as the beginning – hence the image of the circle –, he does not regard it as the beginning of something new, extending into infinity. From Husserl’s perspective, the preceding history of thought has been determined by imperfection and deficits; yet these deficits are shortcomings caused by a lack of self-reflection. They can therefore be overcome, and this is the task of phenomenology. At the same time, such shortcomings in the history of philosophy do not result from contingent difficulties of specific philosophers, but are founded in the objectivist tendency which is already prepared for in the Greek primordial institution of philosophy and which becomes effective particularly during the modern era. Yet is it possible, considering this background, to conceive of transcendental phenomenology as history’s *telos*? After all, the present experience is an experience of crisis, and Husserl himself states: ‘Indeed, philosophy since Descartes exhibits nothing less than the image of

a teleology completing itself.²⁰ We thus need to undertake a closer examination of this teleology within the history of philosophy as diagnosed by Husserl.

Husserl presumes that we not only bring our rationality to bear on history, but that we aim at reason's success and at being enlightened. This assumption is related to the concept of intentionality as the dynamic directedness towards intuiting the object more and more closely. Does the concept of intentionality with its basic schema of expectation and fulfilment or disappointment offer enough room for the surprising and the new? Considered on the level of history, does Husserl's philosophy sufficiently account for the nature of the future, given that the future appears to be more than and different from the process of increasing rationalization?

Husserl has often been criticized regarding his conception of the future. His conception would not allow for the 'essentially new'²¹ or for the 'unexpected, surprising future'.²² The most prominent expression of this criticism can be found in Emmanuel Levinas's philosophy. Levinas points out that, in its true nature, the future is absolutely other and cannot be grasped or anticipated. The future is absolutely surprising; this has been missed by all theories of time, from Bergson to Sartre, since they considered the future to be a projection of the past.²³ The concept of intentionality which is so central to Husserl's phenomenology makes it impossible, according to Levinas, to conceive of the future as absolutely other: in the 'intentional relation of representation ... the same is in relation with the other but in such a way that the other does not determine the same; it is always the same that determines the other'.²⁴

To be sure, it is always possible to confront Levinas's concept of the 'absolutely other' with the (more Hegelian than Husserlian) question as to what absolute otherness is supposed to mean if it is absolute, that is, in no way related to a same. Phrased in phenomenological terms and related more concretely to the future, the question is, how can the future surprise us if surprising is not supposed to mean running counter to an expectation or being different from all expectation?

This problem shall first be considered here with respect to individual time-consciousness and its intentionality. The basic schema of intentionality as developed, for example, in *Analyses Concerning Passive Synthesis*, involves having an expectation about the further continuation of my perception. This expectation will be fulfilled or disappointed. In this process, a retroactive crossing-out can occur, as when we realize that what we took to be a human being is, and has been, in fact a mannequin. Such an expectation is obviously grounded in the present perception; but it can always be disappointed, and we know about the possibility of such disappointment. This basic schema can also account for the difference between intersubjectivity and the perception of

an object: the Other is accessible in the mode of inaccessibility. Here as well, I have expectations and might even expect the Other to behave like myself, but I constantly encounter the failures of such assumptions. The Other surprises me, offering more and at the same time less than I had expected.

Husserl can well be accused of not sufficiently examining the dimension of the unexpected, although his late philosophy attends more to this dimension (without, however, explaining how the basic concepts of his philosophy need to be modified). The 'positive' function of that which crosses out would need to be emphasized more; such an objection could be brought forth against Husserl, with the help of Hegel. Crossing out is not merely an 'obstacle' (*Hemmung*)²⁵ or 'disappointment' (*Enttäuschung*).²⁶ Although the expressions 'obstacle' and 'disappointment' do not hold negative connotations for Husserl, it is not by chance that he uses these expressions rather than stating that something comes towards us or overcomes us.

On the level of history, the situation is doubtlessly more complex than on the level of time-consciousness, and our plans – individual and communal ones – are crossed through in a less obvious fashion. Does the future perhaps indeed play a marginal role in Husserl's conception of history, given that he appears to be mostly interested in 'rationalization'? This claim could be supported by the fact that transcendental phenomenology, for Husserl, has the task of fulfilling the primordially instituted sense which was at work, albeit in a concealed fashion, in past philosophies. The tasks, possibilities and limits of phenomenology thus appear to be set in advance. The expression 'reactivation' is significant in this context because it designates a turning back. What is being reactivated is a first instituting act,²⁷ such as the act of primordially instituting philosophy and science. Yet this reactivation harbours – and this is essential – a directedness towards the future which consists in 'me having this abiding direction of will "from now on (*hinfort*)"'.²⁸ Reactivation thus means that, upon reflection, I take up a decision or a task again. This means, first, that I do not simply repeat this task, but revive it for myself (and modify it in such a way that it can be presently alive for me). Second, the mere revival of a task or direction does not yet tell us anything about its actual execution; that would be too easy. Rather, we reflect on the past in order to get a better sense of how we should try to shape our future – and this is more difficult than just enjoying the day.

The fact that we have a future and worry about it distinguishes us from animals, according to Husserl.²⁹ This concern is rooted in the 'world's structure of fate and death'³⁰ – and it is this structure which human beings meet with reason and with rational planning. How does reason manifest itself, and how does it come to appear? Already in the *Kaizo* articles, it becomes obvious that Husserl conceives of reason in the sense of Greek *logos*, designating that in

which humans participate. That which humans share then finds its expression in *logos* qua language.

DERRIDA'S CRITIQUE OF TELEOLOGY

The difference between Husserl's understanding of history and the traditional approach is most concisely named when Husserl describes his considerations as '*ideengeschichtlich*', that is, concerned with the history of ideas. 'Idea' names the contrast to an (external) 'fact'. The objective sciences treat the world as a 'regulated, but non-sensical fact'.³¹ Once history becomes a philosophical topic, the concern lies with the "meaning" or reason in history' which transcends the 'world understood as the universe of mere facts'.³² We should therefore not be surprised that Husserl is not concerned with empirical facts of history; as Derrida points out, the mere expectation to find such an empirical history in Husserl reveals the reader to have misunderstood Husserl's method and intentions.³³ What Husserl actually strives to do, as Derrida rightly puts it, is to 'decipher in advance the text hidden under every empirical story about which we would be curious'.³⁴ He is concerned with the hidden conditions for the possibility of empirical history.

However, Husserl's focus on the history of ideas certainly does not mean that the 'timing' of events becomes irrelevant. They necessarily occur at certain points in the development of the history of ideas. Even though Husserl's discussion of Galileo, for example, aims at 'understanding the movement of the Idea that passes through him historically' (as Paul Ricoeur points out),³⁵ Galileo could not have come up with his hypothesis of universal mathematization at some entirely different point.

A short excerpt from Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia* serves to illustrate this point. *Arcadia* is a play which involves two sets of characters, one situated in 1809, the other in the present times (1993). In 1809, a 13-year-old girl called Thomasina is fascinated with mathematics and fills notebooks with her calculations. When Valentine, an advanced student in mathematical biology, finds one of her notebooks in 1993, he realizes that her calculations pursue the same principle of iteration and feedback which he engages in the context of chaos theory. In this context, a conversation occurs between Hannah (a writer) and Valentine. Hannah wonders why the principle of feedback has not been tried before, given that it is much less complicated, as a theory, than Einstein's relativity theory. Valentine responds that the role of the electronic calculator for feedback theory was equivalent to the role of the telescope for Galileo. When Hannah is dissatisfied by the contingency of the reasons and asks whether those were really

the only reasons, namely, that it would have taken too much time without calculator, Valentine responds: 'No, I'm saying you'd have to have a reason for doing it.'³⁶

Valentine is thus explaining to Hannah that the discovery of chaos theory was in some sense dependent on the factual existence of electronic calculators (which, of course, in turn depends on certain scientific theories), but even more so, it required a reason, a motivation. The calculator would form a necessary reason, but the motivation would need to be added as a sufficient reason. The development of previous ideas needed to have reached the point when there is a reason to undertake these calculations. In other words, there has to be a question or a problem to which the new idea promises to provide a response.

Husserl coins a special term for those ideas which contribute something new and then become a lasting acquisition: *Urstiftung*. *Urstiftung* is a term which is difficult to translate into English. *Ur-* means 'original', 'primal', or 'primordial', and *Stiftung* can be translated as 'institution', 'establishment', or 'foundation'. Husserl uses the term in his historical reflections to refer to such ideas or theories which become established and then turn into an available heritage, and which we can understand better by asking how they were first instituted, and what their original sense or meaning was.

According to Husserl, the ancient Greeks originally understood philosophy and science to be united and believed them to be a single universal science that was justified absolutely. As mentioned in the first section, already the original sense was determined by a duality which prepared for the current crisis. From the beginning, science focused more on objectivity than subjective multiplicity, or on the unified object rather than its multiple subject-relative appearances. This one-sided tendency turned into objectivism when the mathematization of nature allowed for an apparently truly objective description of nature through numbers and ideal geometric shapes.

There are two important points of clarification about *Urstiftung*: First, the emphasis on *Ur* or on the original should not be mistaken to point to something that necessarily lies in the past. Derrida puts this quite succinctly when he asks: 'Must we not say that geometry is on the way toward its origin, instead of proceeding from it?'³⁷ Derrida immediately points out that this is also Husserl's understanding of origin; origin designates the sense, goal or intention of geometry, and since this sense has not yet been actualized or realized (at least not fully), it still lies ahead and guides geometry. Second, the concept of *Stiftung* is not only relevant with respect to that which is so new and different from any previous establishment that it indeed warrants the term *Urstiftung*. Rather, there are also important *Stiftungen* which build on something existent, but transform it essentially; Husserl designates these as *Umstiftungen* (re-establishments).

Both of these characteristics go hand in hand with Husserl's idea of history as teleological. By teleology, Husserl means the intentions and goals which are at work in history and provide it with an inner unity. However, Husserl's concept of teleology differs from classical concepts such as Hegel's because Husserl conceives of history as open (rather than striving for one final goal or completion). According to Husserl, the goals which are at work in history can be modified and redefined, for example, as the result of a crisis. The teleology which is at work in history thus points us to goals that were instituted and yet still lie ahead of us, and it involves transformations such as *Umstiftungen*.

The concept of a *Stiftung* which can still lie ahead of us and of an *Umstiftung* which allows for redefinitions are important components of Husserl's idea of an infinitely open teleology in which the goals are not determined once and for all. Nevertheless, Derrida takes issue with Husserl's idea of teleology (and with all ideas of teleology), and it is important to briefly consider this criticism because the idea of teleology is so closely embedded into Husserl's concept of history that his phenomenological-historical approach towards the origin of mathematics might become endangered by this criticism.

The decisive phenomenon which eludes the teleological notion of history is that of the 'event' which Derrida already names in his introduction to Husserl's 'Origin of Geometry' ³⁸ and examines more closely in *Rogues*. Teleology 'neutralizes ... the unforeseeable and incalculable irruption, the singular and exceptional alterity of what comes'.³⁹ The unforeseeable event names something which breaks with all meaningful connections and cannot even really become integrated in retrospect. However, it seems to me that Derrida's notion of the event is in certain ways quite close to Husserl's idea of a *Stiftung*, and it even seems plausible to presume that Derrida developed his notion of event after carefully considering the Husserlian concept of *Stiftung*.

One important point of connection is that a *Stiftung*, although it might appear motivated in retrospect, certainly cannot be predicted in advance, but requires a leap. As we have seen with respect to the mathematization of nature, the reflection on ideal objects is motivated by certain lifeworldly practices, but requires a leap from perfections in the perceptual realm to the idea of a geometrical object which is not itself perceptual. In that sense, the emergence of mathematics resembles that of philosophy which has been linked by Plato and Aristotle to an experience of wonder (about the fact that there is something rather than nothing), but such an explanation cannot ever lock the emergence into a strictly causal chain of events. Because of such parallels, Derrida comments that the 'institution of geometry could only be a *philosophical act*'.⁴⁰

Second, Derrida's characterization of the event seems to rely on insights about the non-linear character of historicity as Husserl develops them with respect to the concept of *Stiftung*. Geometry is on its way towards its origin; the past is never simply the past, nor the future simply the future. Similarly,

the event is that which will be and already has been, or more precisely, that which 'will have been',⁴¹ transcending our common understanding of time and history. To be sure, the event in the Derridean sense cuts across our expectations in a more radical sense than the Husserlian *Stiftung* since the event also in retrospect cannot really be integrated into a history of ideas. The event designates 'what comes to pass only once, only one time, a single time, a first and last time, in an always singular, unique, exceptional, irreplaceable, unforeseeable, and incalculable fashion'.⁴² These brief considerations merely meant to point out Derrida's careful reflections on history, and *Stiftung* in the Husserlian sense may have influenced his development of the concept of the event which breaks with our assumptions in a more radical fashion, but continues some characteristics of *Stiftung*. From a Husserlian perspective, it is only possible to describe an occurrence as surprising *because* it breaks with our expectations and assumptions; he might thus say that thinking about events can still happen on the basis of a teleological notion of history, as long as this notion is sufficiently open. Furthermore, Husserl is concerned specifically with the origin of geometry, and this origin is linked to a *Stiftung*, not an event.

At the same time, it turns out that Husserl's phenomenology needs to reconsider its status and methodology once history in the phenomenological sense is taken seriously into account. There is a change in the status of the subjectivity which is being examined. We ourselves as philosophizing subjects are historically situated;⁴³ we cannot raise ourselves above the world and take a firm standpoint there. In this sense, Husserl's formulation is misleading when he states that after undertaking the *epoché*, we find ourselves *above* the world⁴⁴ since it implies the possibility of taking a standpoint outside of the world as historically becoming. Furthermore, the character of knowledge is modified: 'A history which could judge in a supra-temporal, final fashion "how it really was" is an impossibility in principle'.⁴⁵ When Husserl, in a text supplementary to the *Crisis*, mentions the 'fiction (*Dichtung*) of the history of philosophy' which changes again and again, two points need to be remembered. First, Husserl always tries in this fiction to understand "'the" philosophy as a unified *telos*'.⁴⁶ Rather than proclaiming arbitrariness, Husserl acknowledges that philosophy's *telos* changes and presents itself differently. Second, Husserl admits that we are dependent on 'fiction' in order to understand the past. There is no 'how it really was' outside of that which is handed down to us; we need to interpret the pieces of 'fiction', relate them to each other and question them regarding their inner truth.⁴⁷

In the final act of Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, the characters from the two different historical settings come together and interact. This is most obviously a fiction; somebody who is alive in 1809 cannot possibly communicate with somebody living in 1993. However, by creating this fiction, Stoppard might

reveal the character of history as a fiction better than a historiographer's account. While we do not actually communicate face-to-face with somebody from a different century, their ideas and spiritual accomplishments are handed down to us as a tradition, and it is more illusionary to think that the past lies (safely) behind us than to think that we still do, indirectly, communicate with past generations.

WORLD IN CRISIS?

The relevance of Husserl's considerations for our times finds some confirmation in the fact that Derrida, in his late text *Rogues. Two Essays on Reason*, turns to Husserl's *Crisis* and especially to the notion of crisis. He certainly does not take it for granted that our crisis is Husserl's crisis, but since it is rare for philosophers to focus on crises and especially historical crises, Derrida seems to suggest that we take Husserl's considerations seriously, at least as a starting point. On this basis, we might then ask: 'What would have changed for us since 1935–36, since this Husserlian call to a philosophical and European coming to awareness in the experience of a crisis of the sciences and of reason?'⁴⁸ Perhaps we need to try to think 'something other, in any case, than a crisis of reason, beyond a crisis of science and of conscience, beyond a crisis of Europe', Derrida suggests.⁴⁹ However, as his reflections unfold, it appears that the crisis is actually still a crisis of reason and perhaps of the sciences and also of Europe; it is just not limited to Europe and to the sciences, but is more encompassing. And it is still a crisis of reason, but involves reason in a more entangled or interdependent fashion than it initially seemed.

Maybe 'our' crisis goes back to the same primacy of quantification that Husserl identified as problematic, no longer only embodied by the natural sciences but rather, the economic sciences, their laws and predictions. Maybe the crisis is an unrestrained capitalism, paired up with a global expansion of that which for Hegel was called 'civil society' and which originally held a subordinate position in the system to that of the political, and for good reasons. A phenomenological response to this explosive combination of factors cannot be developed here; that would be a different project. But according to Husserl, the first step would need to be a reflection back from the abstract to the concrete, and thus to the concrete lifeworld. The economic sciences consider relations that have their lifeworldly origin in swapping and trading. It is by way of trading, as Husserl points out, that the Greeks got to know alien trading nations, and this sort of experience can lead to a productive 'crisis' of the home conviction. Levelling down all differences towards the illusion of a uniform lifeworld can only conceal the crisis, and thus contribute to it. By contrast, the encounter with the alien can, as Husserl points out, inspire

wonder and may lead to philosophical questioning, including into the question of origins.⁵⁰

Traditional philosophy has resembled the sciences by placing an emphasis on the identical being-in-itself in contrast to the various subjective ways of grasping it. Phenomenology, in contrast, strives to examine both the relative ways of givenness and the non-relative core, and the difference between them. It is this twofold emphasis, and the focus on the relation between objectivity and subjective givenness, that justifies Husserl's otherwise peculiar claims at the end of the essay in 'The Origin of Geometry'. Husserl here explains that his phenomenological approach to history is closely linked with the existence of a 'universal historical a priori' and an a priori of the lifeworld. In fact, he seems to claim (although his formulations are somewhat ambiguous in this respect) that the existence of such an a priori forms the presupposition of his method.

Husserl deemed the project of an 'ontology of the lifeworld' very important,⁵¹ but he never really carried it out.⁵² For him, such an ontology would be a crucial component of a phenomenology of historical worlds. Such an ontology would be concerned with identifying irrelative or invariant structures of the lifeworld which form a 'lifeworldly apriori'.⁵³ Husserl is convinced that the lifeworld has 'in all its relative features, a *general structure* which is "not itself relative"'.⁵⁴ The assumption of such an apriori is dubious to Derrida. At the same time, it is Derrida who alerts us to one of Husserl's most plausible examples for such invariant structures: the earth-ground (*Erdboden*) which designates the phenomenon that every culture rests on some kind of earth-as-ground, even though its actual appearance varies, in accordance with the culture and historical epoch.⁵⁵ Each culture and each epoch needs some version of earth-ground on which to build their dwelling, and this earth-ground forms their point of orientation, their 'here', which is experienced as resting (so that motion can be defined in relation to it). Although the actual givenness of this earth-ground varies from culture to culture and epoch to epoch, it makes sense to identify the structure of earth-ground as constitutive of every lifeworld.

This example works well to show the strength of the phenomenological method: Phenomenology can identify the one, unified, irrelative structure (in this case, of earth-ground), but it also attends to the multiple forms of givenness. Phenomenology thus does not undermine the project of the sciences, but complements it by trying to understand it better. By thematizing the relation between ideal objects and lifeworld, phenomenology can also describe what a remarkable accomplishment the spiritual idealisation is, and how it allows us to take an extreme distance from our entanglement in the vagueness of the lifeworld. It is this vagueness which prevents Valentine, the scientist in Tom Stoppard's play *Arcadia*, to continue his work on a mathematical model of

the grouse population. Close to tears, he decides that he cannot do it because there is 'just too much *bloody noise!*'⁵⁶ Or, as Valentine described it earlier: 'Distortions. Interference. Real data is messy'.⁵⁷ There is no solution to this problem; but it might help to thematize the 'noise' as such, rather than trying to forget about the noisy lifeworld. It would also help to keep in mind that ideas in the Husserlian sense, including invariant structures, are nothing that we find in experience as such; when we encounter a manifestation of them in experience, it is indeed an historical manifestation, not the structure as an idea.⁵⁸

To sum up, the differences between Hegel and Husserl regarding the concept of teleology are rooted in their divergent conceptions of history's *telos*. For Hegel, this *telos* is attainable and unchangeable; for Husserl, it is unattainable and can be modified in the course of history. While it might seem likely that a teleological conception of history would lead to an emphasis on the future, this is the case neither for Hegel nor for Husserl. Hegel considers the present as completion of a teleological development. In Husserl's philosophy, the present plays an essential role as the dividing line between the primordially instituted sense and the goals of the future. Our expectations and goals for the future are (partly) known to us in the present, as yet unfulfilled; whether they will become fulfilled in the future is later on measured back against these expectations.

Although it has turned out that it is justified to describe a surprise from the phenomenological perspective as that which runs counter to our expectations, Husserl does place too little emphasis on the 'positive' and not merely disappointing aspect of the way in which the future comes towards us as new and surprising. It is thus true that Hegel and Husserl, in different ways, do not give sufficient room to the phenomenon of the future in their conception of history. In Hegel's case, this shortcoming is grounded in the essence of his philosophy, while Husserl's phenomenology would allow him to place more emphasis on the coming of the future. Hegel thus holds on the primacy of the present in accordance with his philosophy; Husserl holds on to the same primacy, yet against the possibilities of his phenomenology.

This also becomes obvious on the level of communal history: Husserl's attempts to transcend the various home- and alienworlds towards one world run counter to his own philosophy. Furthermore, Husserl discusses home-worlds in much more detail than alienworlds. To be sure, a phenomenology of the alien has an entirely different character than that of the home; it requires considering the different forms of rupture in the home experience and the different ways of being called into question. It sometimes seems as if Husserl wanted to stay on safe, homey ground as long as possible – even though he has already realized that the home is always already permeated by the alien and that even the traditionally self-certain transcendental ego withdraws.

In a similar fashion, Sartre criticizes Hegel, here in respect to intersubjectivity, by accusing him of an ontological and epistemological optimism. According to Sartre, Hegel takes the perspective of the whole and thereby takes position outside of consciousness; he attempts to surpass the 'plurality' towards the 'totality'.⁵⁹ Yet it is not possible for us to take up the standpoint of totality: 'No logical or epistemological optimism can cover the scandal of the plurality of consciousnesses. If Hegel believed that it could, this is because he never grasped the nature of that particular dimension of being which is self-consciousness.'⁶⁰ The desire to take up the viewpoint of an encompassing totality is understandable and human. But we gain a future only by giving up on complete transparency.

NOTES

1. Jacques Derrida, *Edmund Husserl's Origin of Geometry. An Introduction*, transl. J.P. Leavy. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 66.

2. To give just one example which is chosen here because of its close connection to our current theme, let me quote Ernst Tugendhat: 'The possibility of a self-responsible, critical relation to the state is not allowed for by Hegel; instead, we learn: the existent laws carry absolute authority; the community determines what the individual is supposed to do; the individual conscience has to disappear, and reflection is replaced by trust – this is what Hegel means by the sublation of morality into *Sittlichkeit*' (Ernst Tugendhat, *Selbstbewußtsein und Selbstbestimmung (Self-Consciousness and Self-Determination)* [Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1979], 349).

3. Hegel, PhR, 26/21.

4. Hegel, PhiHi I, 141/116.

5. Hegel, PhiHi I, 140/115.

6. See PhS, 491/589: 'Conversely, to each abstract moment of Science corresponds a shape of manifest Spirit as such (*eine Gestalt des erscheinenden Geistes überhaupt*).'

7. Hegel, PhS, 492/590.

8. Hegel, PhiHi I, 53/38.

9. Ibid.

10. Hegel, PhiHi, 141/116. See also Enc. III, § 577: 'And this movement is just as much the activity of knowing in which the eternal idea in and for itself engages, creates, and enjoys itself as absolute Spirit.'

11. Hegel, ScL I, 164.

12. Ibid.

13. Hegel, Enc. II, 26.

14. Hegel, PhiHi, 105.

15. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 362.

16. Husserl, Hua VI, 74/73.

17. Husserl, Hua VI, 16/17.

18. However, he asks rhetorical questions like this one: 'Is philosophy perhaps merely a primary example of the universal truth that the deepest and truest history is the one which takes place in the common history of external, motivational contexts, as a history of ideas in the sense which has to first be clarified with respect to philosophy?' (Husserl, Hua XXIX, 418).

19. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 408.

20. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 398.

21. Paul Janssen, *Geschichte und Lebenswelt (History and Lifeworld)* (The Hague: Kluwer, 1970), 114. Janssen first explains with respect to Hegel's concept of history: 'In this way, historical teleology lets the future become inessential because the present, as preserving completion of the past, contains the essence of the future such that nothing 'essentially new' can come from it.' And a corresponding footnote explains: 'This feature also holds for the historical teleology in Hegel as well as in Husserl. In Husserl, this is less obvious since he considers the future as an infinite horizon for phenomenological research and development. But this future horizon is defined by the conditions of transcendental phenomenology which determine in advance that only something which conforms to it can occur.'

22. Rudolf Bernet, 'Die ungegenwärtige Gegenwart. Anwesenheit und Abwesenheit in Husserls Analyse des Zeitbewußtseins' ('The Unpresent Present. Presence and Absence in Husserl's Analysis of Time-Consciousness'), in *Zeit und Zeitlichkeit bei Husserl und Heidegger. Phänomenologische Forschungen (Time and Temporality in Husserl and Heidegger. Phenomenological Research)* 14, ed. E. W. Orth (Freiburg: Alber, 1983), 30f.: 'The analysis of time as epistemologically oriented expands further the primacy of the now-present as naturally assumed. However, it employs the unnatural reduction of the passed present to the present remembering ("Vergegenwärtigung") and the future present to the current expectation ("Entgegenwärtigung") of the future. It thus denies the forgotten past and the unexpected, surprising future.'

23. Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other*, transl. R. A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987), 82.

24. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, transl. A. Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 124.

25. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 366.

26. Husserl, Hua XI, 25/63.

27. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 371.

28. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 371f.

29. Manuscript E III 4, 'Teleologie', 3a: 'The *life of the animal* as life in the concrete present with its small component of future. The *human life* as life into a wide future of life, as *life in care* which turns into universal care for the entire future of life' ('Das *Leben des Tieres* als Leben in der konkreten Gegenwart, mit ihrem kleinen Bestand von Zukunft. Das *Menschenleben* als Leben in eine weite Lebenszukunft hinein, als *Leben in der Vorsorge*, die zur universalen Sorge für die ganze Lebenszukunft wird'). I would like to thank the Husserl Archives, Leuven, for permission to cite from this manuscript.

30. E III 4, 10a: 'Schicksals- und Todesstruktur der Welt' ('Destiny and Death Structure of the World').

31. Husserl, Hua VI, 230.

32. Husserl, Hua VI, 9/7.

33. 'And the annoyed letdown of those who would expect Husserl to tell them what really happened, to tell them a story, can be sharp and easily imaginable: however, this disappointment is illegitimate' (Derrida, *Husserl's Origin*, 65).

34. Derrida, *Husserl's Origin*, 66.

35. Paul Ricoeur, *Husserl: An Analysis of his Phenomenology* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 144.

36. Tom Stoppard, *Arcadia* (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), 51f.

37. Derrida, *Husserl's Origin*, 131.

38. Derrida, *Husserl's Origin*, 151.

39. Husserl, *Rogues*, 128.

40. Derrida, *Husserl's Origin*, 127.

41. Geoffrey Bennington, 'In the Event', in *Derrida's Legacies: Literature and Philosophy*, ed. R. Eaglestone (London: Routledge, 2008), 26.

42. Derrida, *Rogues*, 135.

43. Husserl, Hua VI, 196/193.

44. Such formulations can still be found in the *Crisis*: Husserl, Hua VI, 155/152.

45. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 233.

46. Husserl, Hua VI, 513. Due to the character of *Dichtung* that Husserl is after at this point, fiction strikes me as the more fitting English term than poetry.

47. Investigating the relation between *Geschichte* as 'history' and as 'story' or 'narrative', David Carr maintains that our experience of history already has a narrative character. Since our life is structured by goals and intentions which are being fulfilled, dismissed or modified, there are beginnings and ends also in our lives; this holds for individual as well as communal life. Carr also provides a response to the objection that there have been peoples without historical tales and without a documented interest in their history. In accordance with our lifeworldly experience of time, Carr distinguishes between two ways of existing temporally: a linear, teleological, narrative, historical mode of existence, and a cyclical mode, repeated by way of rituals (David Carr, 'Phenomenology and Historical Knowledge'. *Phänomenologische Forschungen – Sonderband: Interculturalitaet (Phenomenological Research – Special Volume: Interculturality)*. 1998: 112–130). If we assume that these two ways of experiencing time do not need to be strictly separated but might even work together, the distinction might help us to understand how a teleological conception of history does not necessarily need to be purely linear. According to Husserl, the primordial institution becomes revealed only in the final institution (Husserl, Hua VI, 74/73), and Hegel repeatedly turns to the image of the circle in explaining his teleological understanding of history.

48. Derrida, *Rogues*, 124.

49. *Ibid.*

50. See Chapter 6, or Hua VI, 331 on wonder and Hua XXIX, 387 on the significance of encountering the alien.

51. Husserl, Hua VI § 37.

52. In addition to the *Crisis* and supplementary manuscripts, Husserl provides indications for such a project in a manuscript entitled 'The Anthropological World' (Hua XXIX).

53. Husserl, Hua VI, 139/142.

54. Husserl, Hua VI, 139/142.

55. Derrida, *Husserl's Origin*, 84 ff. Husserl suggests a closer examination of the lifeworld's ground function in the *Crisis* (Husserl, Hua VI, 158), but he conducts it elsewhere, namely, in his 'Notizen zur Raumkonstitution' (1934), *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 1 (1941): 21–37, and in Husserl, 'Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature: The Originary Ark, the Earth, Does Not Move', in *Husserl at the Limits of Phenomenology*, ed. M. Merleau-Ponty, M., incl. texts by Edmund Husserl (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2002), 117–131. Already the titles of these manuscripts indicate that the earth-ground is taken here to constitute the spatiality of the lifeworld. In order to investigate the nature of the earth-ground, Husserl revisits his reflections on the lived-body (*Leib*). Just like the lived-body presents a zero point in relation to which rest and motion acquire their meaning, the earth-ground exhibits this function on the larger scale.

56. Stoppard, *Arcadia*, 62.

57. Stoppard, *Arcadia*, 46.

58. I thus agree with Crowell who alerts us to Derrida's statement that ideas are 'nothing outside of history' (Derrida, *Husserl's Origin*, 142) and rightfully adds that they are also nothing outside of history (Stephen Crowell, 'Husserl's Existentialism: Ideality, Traditions, and the Historical Apriori', in *Continental Philosophy Review*. Online First, 14 March, 2016: 82). Crowell believes that this undermines the scientific character of Husserl's philosophy; to my mind, this depends on what concept of science we bring to bear, and if it is a Hegelian-inspired concept, yet in a radicalized form, I see no problem as such.

59. Jean-Paul Sartre. *L'être et le néant* (Being and Nothingness) (Paris: Gallimard, 1943), 243.

60. Sartre, *L'être et le néant*, 244.

Chapter 10

Cultural Worlds, or the Good and the Beautiful

Manifold is the uncanny, yet nothing uncanner than man bestirs itself, rising up beyond him.

Sophocles, *Antigone*, 333 (Heidegger's translation)

What are cultural worlds? How can we determine their content more closely? Cultural worlds consist of cultural products, but also values and norms. They are thus between aesthetics or ethics, or at the cross-section of both. It goes to Hegel's credit to alert us that ethics is not just a matter of our individual decision – and be it in line with something as universal yet abstract as the categorical imperative. Rather, being ethical means for an individual to consider the world he or she lives in. This world precedes the individual as a meaningful context that is determined by certain senses, atmospheres and ideals. It is also a world of customs, laws and regulations which the individual needs to consider. This does not mean one needs to adhere to these customs blindly; in fact, it does not even mean one needs to adhere to them at all if they prove faulty or outdated. Yet considering them is necessary since our actions are always actions in context, that is, actions that emerge from a context and influence this context in turn. With Hegel, we can say that an ethical decision is a decision that is made after considering the world we live in, but needs to also involve the conscience of the individual, as we will see more closely.

Ethics is thus an interplay of (more or less) rational decisions and habitualized laws. This interplay has taken different shapes during history, and at different times, one or the other element dominates. Husserl is usually interpreted as tending more towards the modern Kantian perspective, whereas Hegel is said to emphasize the necessary reconciliation of self-consciousness and general law in which the law becomes a 'second nature' to me us. There is certainly some truth to this common interpretation; yet in the end, each of

them emphasizes both aspects of ethics, morality as well as habitualization. Husserl's focus on reason might let us forget that he also acknowledges the significance of tradition and heritage (in the widest sense). In reading Husserl's *Kaizo* articles, I will therefore highlight a theme which at first does not seem central to the articles: the level of 'religious culture'.

There are similar reasons that motivate Hegel and Husserl to stress the significance of habitualized norms. Aside from vaguely pragmatic reasons, namely, that we could often not act (or would act too late) if relying on the categorical imperative, both of them notice a certain emptiness in Kant's notion of reason which inspires them to turn back to the ancient world. For ethical questions, history carries a special significance in several respects. Husserl shares Hegel's conviction that something like communal consciousness exists and that, particularly in the context of ethical consideration, we need to move beyond the boundaries of the individual. But how can we consider the world we live in? How can we get a sense of that world, given that we tend to take it for granted as our familiar context? That is where a 'phenomenology' of that world would be helpful, namely, a description of how this world comes to appear. That is where art and literature will play crucial roles.

HEGEL ON MORALITY VERSUS *SITTlichkeit*

As we explore the difference between morality and *Sittlichkeit*, there is a puzzle in Hegel's philosophy which we should be aware of and try to resolve in this section. In the *Phenomenology*, *Sittlichkeit* precedes morality as a level of Spirit, whereas in the *Philosophy of Right*, morality precedes *Sittlichkeit*. Given the internal necessity that determines dialectical progression for Hegel, such a reversal should not happen. Yet in order to see how this is not a contradiction, we need to understand both concepts better.

On the most general level, morality refers to an individual consciousness, whereas *Sittlichkeit* is always concerned with a community. *Sittlichkeit* relates to *Sitte*, custom, and there is no such thing as 'my' custom; rather, it has to be at least the custom of a small community like a family (e.g. 'In our family, it is customary at Christmas ...'). The concept of morality, in contrast, is borrowed from Kant who contrasts it with legality. Morality is rational and free. It corresponds to the spirit of modern times which elevates the subject to the level of the highest principle and does not accept any law without examining it. From the standpoint of morality, it is the subject's highest right 'to recognize nothing that I do not perceive as rational'.¹

The state of morality is hence a state of diremption (*Entzweiung*) in which the individual recognizes his or her own will in contrast to and possibly in

conflict with the laws of society. A main point of critique raised by Hegel against the standpoint of morality as conceived by Kant is its emptiness of content rooted in the fact that the individual gives its own laws. We have hence received an indication that morality, as a state of diremption, has to be overcome. Such overcoming happens by what Hegel designates as *Sittlichkeit*; yet this is no longer the immediate *Sittlichkeit* of the ancient world. The identity of individual will and communal customs is replaced by a relation between them, such that the individual takes over certain customs as a matter of conviction. This form of *Sittlichkeit* is realized in the European state.²

These preliminary considerations already show a certain difficulty of the relation between morality and *Sittlichkeit*. Historically speaking, *Sittlichkeit* both precedes and follows morality. The immediate form of *Sittlichkeit* can be found in antiquity, the mediated form in the European states of Hegel's time. Hegel had not yet thought through the mediated form of *Sittlichkeit* at the time of writing the *Phenomenology* (– just like his state was still in a condition of turmoil). Superficially speaking, this is the reason why, in the *Phenomenology*, *Sittlichkeit* (in the shape of ancient *Sittlichkeit*) precedes morality, and morality then enters into religion,³ whereas in the *Philosophy of Right*, *Sittlichkeit* follows upon morality.⁴ The earlier text focuses on ancient, immediate *Sittlichkeit*, and the later one on mediated *Sittlichkeit*.

In the *Encyclopedia*, Hegel provides a particularly clear definition of *Sittlichkeit*:

When these one-sidednesses (*Einseitigkeiten*) have been sublated, subjective freedom as the universal rational will in and for itself which yields knowledge of itself in the consciousness of individual subjectivity and which has its state of mind as well as its activity and its immediate universal actuality at the same time as custom (*Sitte*) – self-conscious freedom has become its nature.⁵

Sittlichkeit is the sublation of a previous one-sided structure, namely, of the split between subjective freedom and general custom. Subjective freedom now turns into the will which is in and for itself; it has knowledge of itself, but it also possesses an external reality, as custom. Freedom has to become a form of nature as general reality while at the same time being a 'second nature' for the individual. The individual internalizes and habitualizes the laws rather than making about a new decision each time (since this would delay or even prevent our taking action). The passage quoted here already indicates that *Sittlichkeit* does not mean to simply accept and take over existent laws and customs.⁶ Different levels of *Sittlichkeit* need to be distinguished, and when we have left behind the standpoint of immediate *Sittlichkeit*, we reach a *Sittlichkeit* mediated by 'reflection' and 'insight grounded on reasons'.⁷

Although in the *Phenomenology*, *Sittlichkeit* (as ancient, immediate *Sittlichkeit*) precedes morality, the situation turns out to be more complex. The Kantian standpoint – and thus, in a certain sense, the standpoint of morality, although not designated as such – already occurs prior to *Sittlichkeit*, namely, at the end of the chapter on reason. Under the heading of reason as giving laws and reason as testing laws, Hegel criticizes contradictions in Kant's theory.⁸ According to Hegel, reason as giving laws does not say what it really means. When it says, 'Everyone ought to speak the truth,' it actually means 'if he knows the truth'.⁹ The general proposition thus acquires a specific content.

As a result, reason cannot sustain itself; we enter into the realm of Spirit, and Spirit is the 'actuality of *Sittlichkeit*'.¹⁰ Immediate, harmonious *Sittlichkeit* as we find it in ancient Greece 'is submerged in the formal universality of legality or law'.¹¹ As shapes of diremption, *Bildung* and belief are opposed to each other; the enlightenment brings about a revolution of this opposition. The result is a return to moral self-consciousness and thus a return to Kant's theory, albeit on a higher level. At stake is no longer the giving and testing of more or less general laws, but communal life in which the problem of the correlation between morality and happiness arises.¹² The postulate of the harmony between morality and happiness is problematic, since impure motives enter into moral consciousness. In the face of these contradictory motives, moral self-consciousness 'flees from this with abhorrence back into itself' and turns into 'pure conscience'.¹³

The standpoint of conscience will now be treated in some detail. This examination is in line with my overall persuasion that the *Phenomenology*, due to its less rigorous systematicity, provides more openness for thought and more leeway for critique than the *Philosophy of Right*.

HEGEL AND THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF CONSCIENCE

Conscience returns in a certain sense to the individual, even though we are already in the realm of Spirit. It will ultimately be the conversation with others which leads beyond conscience – after a last attempt to enter more deeply into the standpoint of conscience and retain it by giving equal rights to everybody when conscience turns into the beautiful soul.¹⁴

Conscience as 'concrete moral Spirit' which has returned to itself is the immediate unity of moral essence realizing itself and action as concrete moral shape. In and through action, consciousness relates to the actuality.¹⁵

Conscience exists concretely as it fulfils 'not this or that duty, but knows and does what is concretely right'.¹⁶ The positive result of this repeated critique of Kant's moral philosophy consists in solving the conflict of the moral world view; conscience does not helplessly observe the conflict of various

duties, but proceeds to act. Conscience knows that it is in a unique or singular situation such that no casuistic approach can be helpful. When conscience acts, it is in a community with others. The deed is real, and it can be accepted or rejected by others. More precisely, the action is real exactly because it calls for recognition; to act means to translate what is individual into what is universal.¹⁷ For Hegel, the good is not the good will (which does not necessarily come to realize itself and thus cannot be recognized), but the good deed.

At the same time, conscience knows very well about the difficulties of acting which stem from the fact that there are always some circumstances of my action that remain unknown to me. I am confronted with 'a plurality of circumstances which breaks up and spreads out endlessly in all directions'.¹⁸ Conscience is thus always already guilty since it is inevitably ignorant of at least some of the circumstances relevant to the action. The case of Oedipus takes this difficulty to the extreme. Since conscience cannot achieve complete knowledge, it takes its knowledge to be complete. Otherwise, conscience would never come to act. The problem of the moral world view consists exactly in the fact that it is too obsessed with its own deficiencies to proceed to action. The moral world view is concerned with a conflict of duties which are, upon closer consideration, devoid of content; in contrast, conscience imports its content, taken from its individuality, into specific duties.¹⁹

Since all action stays in contact with actuality and with others, an aspect of inequality emerges. The action is a determinate one, 'a *specific* action, not identical with the element of everyone's self-consciousness, and therefore not necessarily acknowledged'.²⁰ Conscience is never merely a private judgement, but calls for general recognition. There are different consciences because everybody has a conscience. We do not know whether the other consciences are good or evil. Yet I have to take the conscience of others as evil in order to assert my own self.²¹

It is necessary for us to articulate our convictions. By giving reasons, we ward off assumptions about bad intentions which others explicitly or implicitly attribute to us. 'Here again, then, we see language as the existence of Spirit',²² as we heard before. With language, others truly come into play, and we are now dealing with Spirit in the genuine sense while moral consciousness previously remained 'dumb' or silent.²³ Language (rather than action) is our true connection to the world; language eliminates alienation. Language connects one self-consciousness to the other; it is the possibility of communication, justification and recognition. The role of language in Hegel is quite close to the significance of *logos* in Husserl. What we share with others is *logos* as language which allows us to give reasons for our actions, that is, giving justification (*logon didonai*). The moment of recognition is only implicitly present in Husserl; he emphasizes the ethical ideal we are striving for, and if this striving is successful, we will gain recognition from rational others.

Although conscience seeks the recognition of others, it is ultimately convinced that it knows best what should be done, since it knows its own situation best. Others can ask for a justification, but from the perspective of my conscience, they owe me respect. As 'moral genius', conscience goes beyond the difference between abstract self-consciousness and its own self-consciousness, returns to itself and acquires its poorest position. The shape of the 'beautiful soul' which does not want its inner beauty to be contaminated by a real action will not be treated in detail here, especially since Hegel also mentions it only briefly.²⁴ The beautiful soul lacks power because it does not come to externalize itself. 'In this transparent purity of its moments, an unhappy, so-called 'beautiful soul', its light dies away within it, and it vanishes like a shapeless vapor that dissolves into thin air.'²⁵ Language thus falls into the inequality of the individual being-for-itself.

Yet the community in its observing role is still present, and it accuses conscience of hypocrisy. Conscience admits that it is evil since it acts according to its law; by doing so, it acts against the others and 'wrongs' them.²⁶ Not only the consciousness which gives its own law realizes that it is evil; judging consciousness has to admit that it is evil as well because in its judging, it shares into the evil. Acting consciousness and judging consciousness are two sides of one and the same coin, as it were. To judge means not to act, yet judging consciousness knows that acting needs to happen. Therefore, it shares the guilt. When judging consciousness makes itself equal to acting consciousness, it is recognized by acting consciousness as equal. Both recognize that they cannot be 'objective' because they cannot consider all possible aspects of the situation. Acting consciousness thus realizes that it is not inferior to judging consciousness. Instead of trying to claim a superior position, it offers forgiveness to judging consciousness – which judging consciousness does not immediately accept. Yet in the end, they admit that each is promoting its own self-interest and realize that they can forgive each other for this. Admitting their guilt opens up the possibility of improvement.²⁷

The two forms of consciousness forgive each other, become reconciled and recognize each other to be one and the same 'I'.²⁸ With this insight, Hegel's phenomenological analysis comes to a close; and we are indeed familiar with the fact that the phenomenon of conscience exhibits a strangely dual nature. It determines the nature of conscience to carry out a dialogue within individual consciousness in which I take distance from myself, as it were, and assess my own intentions and actions. This is not a voluntary act but rather happens to me – almost as if an external voice was speaking to me. Conscience is not a solipsistic phenomenon; it is not a mere monologue. Only because we are in a community and conversation with others do we have conscience. Conscience necessarily involves the interplay of individuality and universality. One conscience by itself cannot decide what is good, as Husserl would agree.

HUSSERL ON THE RENEWAL OF REASON

The *Kaizo* articles,²⁹ written by Husserl in the years of 1922 and 1923, maintain a unique place within his philosophy. There, Husserl introduces certain ethical themes and problems which will be subsequently foregone and will resurface, albeit briefly, only at the end of his philosophical career (in the 1930s). It seems justified then that these essays present themselves to be the key to Husserl's phenomenological ethics.

In their emphases on reason and rationality, the *Kaizo* articles first give an impression of Husserl as a Kantian, and the impression is strengthened by his discussions of the categorical imperative. However, a major portion of the articles and particularly Husserl's reflections on religious culture appear out of place if they are read from the perspective of Kantian ethics. While the influence of Kant's philosophy on Husserl's phenomenological method is undoubtedly strong, this chapter will suggest that Husserl's considerations on ethics rather move him away from Kant and towards Hegel.

Husserl's ethical theory has not been discussed much in the literature; even less so have his *Kaizo* articles found much response, especially in the English literature.³⁰ Those authors who examine these articles either try to give an immanent interpretation without placing the articles in the broader context of ethical theories³¹ or come to conclude that the *Kaizo* articles are somewhat atypical for Husserl's thought.³² I will interpret the *Kaizo* articles as a coherent account which fits well into Husserl's late thought. For this purpose, the concept of reason will be examined in order to show that there are not only Kantian echoes but also ancient Greek ideas which contribute to Husserl's usage of the notion. Afterwards, Husserl's investigation of norms will be considered as it moves him beyond the sphere of the individual. Husserl focuses on religious culture to explain the importance of habitualizing norms.

Ethics, for Husserl, is the 'science of the entire practical life of a rational subjectivity under the viewpoint of reason that regulates this life uniformly'.³³ In order to act in an ethical fashion, we take our orientation from an ideal, the ideal of the true and ethical human being. This ideal is ultimately unattainable, and yet it functions as a criterion, as a 'pole idea' (*Polidee*). Husserl says that every life, even the 'not completely consequential life of self-regulation', qualifies as an ethical life.³⁴ Here we encounter the tension between relativity and absoluteness which permeates Husserl's philosophy. We thus need to investigate what reason means for Husserl and what function or role the ideal of the ethical human being has.

Husserl regards the 'rationalisation of praxis' (*Rationalisierung der Praxis*) as an important task.³⁵ He is convinced that, along with the manifestation of reason, sooner or later there will be a manifestation of the good as well. This trust in the power of reason has its basis in the fact that rational accounts can

be followed or understood. If we act based on reasons which we can explain to others, at least the possibility of a successful co-existence is given. This thought already indicates that, for Husserl, reason constitutes what we all share. Husserl does not develop a specific philosophical concept of reason, but rather leans in on our everyday understanding of rational action, acting on reasons and so on. In one of the few passages that explicitly lay out his concept of reason, Husserl states the following,

The concept of *logos* as autonomous reason and originally theoretical reason, as the faculty of judging in a 'self-less' manner ('*selbstlosen*' *Urteilens*) which, as a judging from pure insight, listens exclusively to the voices of the things 'themselves', acquires thus its original conception and simultaneously its world-changing power (*weltumgestaltende Kraft*).³⁶

Husserl thus refers us back to the Greek concept of *logos*. First, Aristotle famously defined man as the animal which has *logos*. As we will see, Husserl's concern in these articles also lies with specific abilities which distinguish human beings from other animals – abilities to face their lives, to 'survey' it and to take responsibility for it. Second, one of the many facets of *logos*' meaning is 'language'; as noted earlier, Husserl investigates how 'reasons' (another meaning of *logos*) are communicable and comprehensible. Because we have language, we are able to give reasons and accounts (*logon didonai*) for our actions.

However, 'true knowing' in the sense of complete, infallible knowing is in principle unattainable for humans as finite beings. Husserl acknowledges this, yet elevates 'absolute reason' – in the sense of an absolutely increased theoretical and practical reason – to the status of an *ideal*. A being with absolute reason would be God if we simultaneously attribute omnipotence to it.³⁷ The ideal thus functions as a pole, lying in infinity. 'The absolute Limes is the idea of God'; it is 'the genuine and true ego', from which we are always infinitely far removed.³⁸

Before Husserl engages in considerations regarding the idea of God, he provides a simple argument for the existence of such an ideal that is accessible by way of the phenomenological method. If we criticize contemporary humanity as needing improvement, this judgement is based on the belief in a 'good', 'true' and 'genuine' humanity as an ideal possibility.³⁹ We cannot begin our critique without imagining something better; and if our critique is contingent on ethical questions, the better something must be a better humanity. The ideal human is an 'ethical human'.⁴⁰ Only in an ethical human being does the essence of a human being come to completion. Yet such a completely true, genuine, good human can be grasped only through the concept of an unattainable ideal which we nevertheless continuously strive for if we

lead a critical life. As humans, we are never infallible and never reach the point where an improvement in the direction of an ethical ideal is no longer possible. It is because of this necessary restriction that Husserl calls the 'not fully consequential life' ethical as well.

The feature which forms the condition for the possibility of orienting my life in relation to the ideal of the good human is the fact that I can survey my life, more precisely, my 'whole' life, or life in its entirety.⁴¹ This is a strange thought since I obviously do not have a standpoint at my disposal which would allow me to look at my life in its entirety. Perhaps this would be possible on my deathbed – but this is a retrospective position and signifies looking back into the past. Husserl, on the other hand, is concerned with striving for the future. How could a survey be possible in light of the fact that I know about my finitude and mortality, yet the time of my death is entirely inaccessible to me?⁴² Considering this paradoxical situation, it is hardly surprising that Husserl, in the same passage in which he explicates the possibility of surveying my entire life, also talks about the 'infinity of my life'.⁴³ My life is finite and infinite at once since I know about my death as such, but not about the 'when' of this death. To put it in a less contradictory fashion, I set infinite goals for myself despite my finitude; the fact that my life is limited does not exclude infinite responsibility but rather includes it.

If these connections are kept in mind, it becomes obvious why Husserl has some justification to speak about a survey of our entire lives. We have an idea of our future, even if this idea includes a certain indeterminacy. For this future, we are able to set goals. As a human being, I can even set a unitary life goal for myself; at the same time, I can change this goal, and I may even have to change it, in accordance with the changing circumstances. And yet, something remains stable in this change; human beings remain true to themselves, wanting to love themselves, as Husserl once puts it in a manuscript.⁴⁴ This means that humans want to stay true to their conscience and want to act in accordance with it. The possibility for humans to survey their lives means that they have conscience. It means that we can give account for our actions, and it also means that there is always a danger not to be able to 'live' with a certain action.

On the level of the community or the 'human at large' (*Mensch im großen*), these definite yet changeable standards transform into *norms*. Norms develop over time, and it is thus necessary that we can communicate about them – by way of our participation in *logos*. In order to investigate the emergence and development of norms, a static procedure cannot suffice; a 'dynamic-genetic' perspective is called for.⁴⁵ Yet Husserl not only considers the *genesis* of norms in these articles, as he pursues it in the different manuscripts on normality. Rather, he engages in *historical* reflections, particularly in the article 'Formal Types of Culture in the Development of Humanity' which constitutes

the fifth and last essay.⁴⁶ These historical reflections are concerned with the transformation of norms over generations, on the one hand, and the different role of norms in antiquity, Middle Ages and modernity, on the other. Parts of the investigation thus go beyond a genetic phenomenology and belong to an historical-generative phenomenology.

HUSSERL'S PHENOMENOLOGY OF CULTURAL NORMS

Norms exhibit a strange duality as they are 'made' by us, yet at the same time, we are exposed and delivered over to them. Their dual character calls for an historical exploration. It might be tempting to assume that Husserl's call for 'rationalisation', for rational critique, would naturally lead him to strive for a critical questioning of all norms, ruling out any unquestioned acceptance. This modern tendency, inspired by the spirit of enlightenment, is indeed prevalent in Husserl's thought; but it is accompanied by an awareness of the value carried by 'old and awe-inspiring tradition (*altehrwürdige Tradition*)'.⁴⁷ This tradition, although not indisputable, demands a certain respect and awe because norms have always been taken over by us, and this habitualization is a necessary component of ethical action. It is not possible for us to call the existing norms into question in *every* situation, making a critical decision every single time. Such acting would not just be impractical and time-consuming, but it would overwhelm us completely. Ethical action is possible only because certain norms have become a 'second nature' for us.⁴⁸

Whereas critical questioning, as mentioned before, is a modern achievement (which has certain roots in Greek antiquity), Husserl finds a particularly developed form of the habitualization of norms in religious culture. The 'level of religious culture' and the 'level of scientific culture' shall now be sketched briefly. Husserl maintains that we find in every 'higher developed culture' a cultural form of 'religion'.⁴⁹ Within religions, certain laws have the status of absolute norms, that is, norms that are valid not just factually, under the regimen of a certain ruler or during a certain era, but norms that we experience as unconditionally valid. The legislators of these absolute norms are transcendent powers which in a given religion count as divinities. A religion hence contains a system of absolute validities. As long as the dominance of religion remains intact, normal life coincides with religious life.⁵⁰ Husserl summarizes the experience of the religious life in the following, laconic remark, 'There cannot be a tension [here] between authority and freedom, just as little as the dreamer has an awareness of illusion; it exactly presupposes awakening.'⁵¹

Although religion teaches us about the existence of unconditional ought-to's and about the habitualization of norms, and although such life is originally consistent in itself, enabling peaceful co-existence, an awakening is

inevitable. This is partly a consequence of the fact that religious cultures have been and are mostly hierarchical; Husserl mentions explicitly the 'imperialistic' community of priests in the Middle Ages.⁵² A hierarchical culture inevitably exhibits the character of restriction rather than freedom.⁵³ It is hence opposed to our ethical abilities, to our abilities of critically taking position, which are equivalent to our freedom. Hence a religious movement for freedom evolves out of religion by necessity. It is remarkable and noteworthy that Husserl focuses on the movement of critique which emerges from religion itself, that is, on immanent critique, rather than turning towards external critique imposed by philosophy and the sciences. He states that the religious movement for freedom and other similar movements cross over and play together, yet that the self-critique of religion and its internal transformation is a separate process.⁵⁴ The emphasis he places on this fact confirms again that Husserl acknowledges the significance of religion and, in a broader sense, the habitualization of norms.

This level is countered by the level of scientific culture, the 'level of a cultural humanity which forms itself and its environment through pure autonomous reason and, specifically, through scientific reason'.⁵⁵ Although philosophy and science were originally instituted in ancient Greece, the institution of an ethics on the basis of 'pure autonomous reason' happens only in Kant's philosophy. Kant thus plays an important, though not always unequivocal, role in the *Kaizo* articles. Husserl repeatedly refers to the categorical imperative which has validity for all humans in such a way that we can be 'true' humans only if we submit ourselves and our actions to the categorical imperative. Nevertheless, Husserl does not want to 'take over the Kantian formulation and the Kantian explanation, in short, the Kantian theory; just this one thing shall be said, namely, that the individual human being lives a life which, not lived away in an arbitrary fashion, has a value'.⁵⁶ Despite repeated references to Kant, Husserl diverges from the Kantian ethics on a point of utmost significance: For Husserl, an ethical action does not mean a spontaneous new beginning. In the context of Husserl's philosophy, an ethical unconditional beginning is impossible already due to the fact that the intentional basic structure of expectation and fulfilment or disappointment permeates all areas of life.

During the modern era, religion and philosophy necessarily diverge. This does not mean that faith as such and its content are dismissed; yet the predominance of autonomous reason means that nothing can be accepted as unquestioned, merely on the basis of church authority.⁵⁷ In this way, the modern era is immediately opposed to the Middle Ages. The dominance of religion in the Middle Ages led to such a degree of dogmatism and imperialism that modernity had to intervene, as it were. In the process, the advantages and strong sides of premodern culture were neglected or drowned in the

reformation movements. According to Husserl, modern philosophy differs from ancient philosophy particularly in the fact that it submits all traditional sciences to a radical critique of reason which only mathematics can ultimately stand up to.⁵⁸

As Husserl emphasizes the advantages as well as the downsides of religious culture, he alerts us that its insights should not be rejected prematurely. One such insight consists in the habitualization of norms. The modern tendency of individualization, that is, the tendency to underscore the capacities of conscience and reason in the acting person is thus countered by the old European tradition of communal norms. In what way premodern insights can be integrated into or mediated with the modern concept of an autonomy of reason is unfortunately not explicitly spelled out by Husserl. However, he provides two important hints. First, Husserl talks of the primordial institution (*Urstiftung*) of an ethical life which all humans have to undertake for themselves as they reflect and make the decision to lead an ethical life, submitting themselves to unconditional ought-to's.⁵⁹ This primordial institution is then taken up into the habitualization of the critical attitude such that a 'habitual critical position-taking' is formed.⁶⁰ The decision to live and act critically thus does not always have to be repeated anew.

Second, norms can take on 'the character of an available possession and good ... for the single individual, but also for the community'.⁶¹ The rational justification of a norm has to be possible in principle but will not necessarily be carried out before a norm is actually applied, for the norm is part of an 'available possession'. Yet in order for the norm to become such an available possession, different people need to confirm the norm's rationality over a period of time, and the person who applies the norm should justify it in the mode of potentiality, although not in actuality.

Does Husserl thus provide a standard that enables us to determine certain normative laws? All justification of specific laws, so he says, is 'part of the development of an individual ethics itself, not of the outline of its principle guidelines'.⁶² This is a consequence of Husserl's intentions in these articles which also eliminates the impasses and pitfalls involved in working out an ethical theory. It is not Husserl's intention to develop a complete ethical theory or take a position in the controversial discussion of such theories.

However, Husserl envisions certain tasks for philosophers as the 'representatives of the spirit of reason or the spiritual organ through which the community reaches an awareness of its true determination (its true self)'.⁶³ Philosophers are exemplary, as it were, in leading a critical life of self-reflection. It is their task to perceive crises and to critically reflect on them. How is the philosopher supposed to recognize a crisis? Husserl implies that a crisis makes itself known and will be discerned by the philosophers if they are attentive to their community. A crisis can be recognized through

certain moods in the consciousness of a community, such as a fundamental, existential discontent. It can thus be concluded from Husserl's reflections on ethics that philosophers have to be attentive to communal moods, and that they have to stay in touch with the community rather than taking a detached position. These realizations have implications for the relation between natural and philosophical consciousness to be discussed in the concluding sections of this chapter.

WRITING ABOUT THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

It has emerged from these considerations that ethics happens between conscience and norms, freedom and facticity or the individual and his or her world. Furthermore, this is not a relationship of opposition, but penetration and interdependence. Although both elements can be found in both philosophers, Husserl can be said to 'radicalize' or 'deconstruct' Hegel because he keeps the main insights about norms in the wider sense and how they tie our homeworld together, but emphasizes how norms can be changed. Moreover, actual *logos* and dialectics as they happen between humans in political, legal, moral and economic negotiations can fail and can lead to crisis. Hence the task of the phenomenologist is to observe the sense, the atmosphere of a cultural world. But how do they recognize such an atmosphere? Even when the world is in crisis, it can be difficult to discern – and even more so, what that crisis actually consists in. What if it is not crisis but, say, boredom, stagnation or some kind of hidden deterioration on account of a forgetfulness that, by way of being a forgetfulness, is likely to become apparent only when it is at least partially over?

One way to reveal cultural worlds, Heidegger suggests, is the work of art. But this basic idea is already in Hegel, which is why Heidegger engages in some detail with Hegel's claim that art in its highest form is a thing of the past. This means that art would no longer be an appropriate revealing of world. But what is the character of a world that no longer lends itself to artistic revelation? Would it not be a world about which we by definition have to be worried because there seems to be some essential forgetfulness and concealment that resists the disclosure through art? In any case, let us turn to our best option, as it were: art. More precisely, literature, partly because we can only close on one example and partly because literature, by way of its intimate relation to language, might play a special role if we keep in mind that language is the element of Spirit as well as the essence of the homeworld.

German contemporary writer Judith Hermann undertakes this task with respect to several cultural worlds in her first book *Summerhouse, Later*, a collection of short stories. The atmospheres of several cultural worlds are

captured from the perspective of a traveller of German origin, a stranger's view. The perspective of the stranger, so we learn from Plato to Husserl, is revealing because it accomplishes a kind of *epoché*, suspending the familiar. Whether it is New York and the strange local custom of people living in hotels as experienced in 'Hunter Thomson Blues' or the Russian solitary landscape narrated from the female contemplative perspective, the intensity of the Bali beach or the Icelandic silence of the outside world in contrast with sociality of the interior space – the perspective taken proves revealing and draws us in, given that we are also coming to these worlds as the stranger. Yet for Hermann, interpersonal relations between the characters are in the foreground, and in her next book, *Nothing but Ghosts*, cultural worlds no longer play a crucial role.

The writer who arguably reveals the contemporary American world best is David Foster Wallace, as far as its atmosphere is concerned. Yet he does so perhaps not so much by literature as rather through a new genre that we would like to call 'phenomenological ethnography'.⁶⁴ The style (taken in the wide, phenomenological sense) or indeed genre of phenomenological ethnography is exhibited at its best and clearest in the volume *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*. The descriptions which are given sometimes as ethnography, sometimes as auto-ethnography, have a phenomenological extension in that they reveal structures of our existence and especially structures of our interactions with others. Yet even more so, they reveal cultural worlds. Sometimes, this happens in footnotes, which generally add multidimensionality, density and humour to the work: Footnote 53: 'Tibor, table 64's beloved and extremely cool Hungarian waiter ... whose pink and birdlike face on occasions like this expressed a combination of mortification and dignity that seem somehow to sum up the whole plight of postwar Eastern Europe.'⁶⁵

The atmosphere of the contemporary American world, for Wallace, is a world of easy and often infantile pleasures to which people are drawn because they have neither learned to stretch themselves through good literature nor have they learned to say 'no' to the wrong pleasures or to a general excess of pleasures, especially where TV as well as internet activities are concerned. Wallace wonders whether there will be even more trouble for the state of the American cultural subject in the future when internet pornography comes to involve tactile as well as visual elements. Certain cultural moods or atmospheres make people yearn for passive, infantile pleasures, Wallace maintains. We might feel reminded of Heidegger's notion of deep boredom, for example, which he does not take to the cultural level, unlike terror (*Schrecken*) which designates our world for Heidegger.

Wallace states in an interview that he is a writer because he remembers such good experiences of having been a reader, and what was most 'fun' about being a reader was 'being part of some kind of exchange between

consciousnesses'.⁶⁶ In other words, it was the sense of being part of Spirit, or the revelation of a shared cultural world. Because a revelation of our home or *ethnos* is always also a revelation of *ethos*, and thus matters to who we are, the task of the writer can be, as Wallace puts it, 'to mimic how the world feels against our nerve-endings right now'.⁶⁷

RETURNING TO ANTIGONE

But what about literature from the past? Can it still open up its world for us? And does it even matter? In other words, do we even need to relate to past worlds, given that our considerations have shown how important it is to get a sense of our current world and its crisis? Yes. One of the most important lessons has been that the past is never just past, and that we can understand our current situation only if we see better how it has come about. Our current situation is a continuation of past worlds, despite all ruptures and one-sided developments. Especially where the crisis of the Western world is concerned, we have seen it being prepared for ever since the wondrous primordial establishment of the sciences in ancient Greece. This does not mean that the crisis is necessary, or will always be necessary. It means, rather, that as long as we have a tendency to absolve diversity and plurality into univocity, we are likely to eclipse some sides that are relevant to the phenomenon in question and cannot be ignored without paying a price.⁶⁸

Even Husserl, who has alerted us to significance of the concept of horizon that can accommodate openness and interrelation, falls prey to this temptation. Husserl is right to alert us to the attraction of mathematics' unequivocal language. But he goes wrong when he tries to show that all idealities, including all language and thus even literature, would be characterized by the same univocity. Here, Derrida is rightfully on alert. If Husserl as the philosopher who emphasizes the significance of fiction, literature, poetry (*Dichtung*) for phenomenology at the same time misconceives the nature of fiction, we should be careful. Luckily, Husserl falls prey to this temptation in only one text: 'The Origin of Geometry.' When he thinks of language as that which determines our homeworld, diversity is naturally built into this, already by way of the many horizons each of us belongs to.

Instead of univocity, we would be well advised to think of dialectics – but a dialectics that allows for the diversity we find in our world. This also requires allowing for various interpretations of the stories that we consider important for our history. One of the most important stories of that kind is the tragedy of Antigone. Antigone's story is special because it can be used to discuss history in its manifestation as ancient Greek world, but also historicity in its flowing character that reveals invariant structures of our existence. Note,

however, that these invariant structures (which Husserl will help us uncover) can always come into our experience only by way of an historical world. As invariant structures, they are ideas, and ideas are nothing in experience, as we have seen.⁶⁹ Ideas are what we create by way of a leap on the basis of seeing their manifestations in history, and that is where fiction plays a crucial role.

We will begin with the way in which *Antigone* reveals the ancient Greek world, as Hegel shows us. Hegel's reading of *Antigone* has been discussed in much detail by commentators from different schools and orientations. Providing even a brief overview or summary of the various positions would lead us too far astray here. Rather, I would like to focus on two aspects of Hegel's reading, one of which strikes me as an essential insight, indispensable for any interpretation of *Antigone*, the other as a problematic claim which, although comprehensible within Hegel's framework of thought, leads to a one-sided interpretation of *Antigone*. The first aspect concerns the interpretation of *Antigone* as a conflict of two kinds of laws, the second the Hegelian emphasis on reconciliation. Hegel chooses the term 'divine law' for the law which Antigone invokes, and 'human law' for the law given and executed by Creon. Antigone herself refers to the 'sacred laws' given by the Gods, which warrants Hegel's choice of terminology.

According to Antigone, the procedures inscribed by these laws regarding the burial of the dead inevitably and by nature overrule the manmade decision, imposed by Creon, not to bury her brother, Polyneices. Yet as Polyneices attacked his own home city, Creon deems it plausible that the sacred laws would be suspended in this case. By focusing on the conflict between human and divine law, Hegel forces us to consider the positions at stake here, not some individual (and in that sense arbitrary) character traits of the main protagonists. While certain statements in the tragedy could tempt us to offer psychologizing interpretations of Antigone as a rebellious woman⁷⁰ or Creon as a stubborn man,⁷¹ who does not want to admit of being defeated by a woman, Hegel keeps us focused on the basic conflict which surpasses personality traits. This is a significant accomplishment of his interpretation and provides insights into the nature of law in the ancient Greek world.

In his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel refers to and quotes from the *Antigone* text in the context of his well-known critique of Kantian ethics as too formal, a-historical and empty of content. The turn to the Greeks promises to offer a model of laws as rich, concrete and historical; yet it is not specific laws that Hegel wants to invoke, but the general feature, exemplified by Antigone, of laws that simply 'are, and nothing more'.⁷² Rather than starting from an empty a priori principle like the Kantian categorical imperative, we can learn from the Greeks that laws are always already in existence, and that it is the nature of law to be encountered as something binding and pregiven. This character of simply being there is exemplified by the divine law, whereas the

human law opposes such mere existence as something which is 'conscious of what it actually does'.⁷³

While the impression might arise that Sophocles regards Antigone as the (moral) victor of the conflict with Creon, it is Hegel's contribution to present both protagonists and their respective standpoints as equally valid, such that both of them lose (or win) in the end.⁷⁴ There is an essential conflict between the two positions which is ultimately irresolvable. It would be wrong to suspect Hegel of making a case for Creon based on the modernism of Creon's position, reading Antigone as embodying the ancient perspective. Certainly, Creon's arguments are closer to the standpoint of morality which Kant distinguishes from mere legality and which, according to Hegel, characterizes the modern approach to ethical and moral issues. From the standpoint of morality, it is the subject's highest right 'not to accept anything which I do not realize to be rational'.⁷⁵ However, Hegel refers to Antigone's tragedy exactly because modern morality, epitomized in Kantian ethics, strikes him as one-sided, lacking the ancient emphasis on laws and customs as pre-given. These two standpoints can be read outside their historical manifestations as aspects of law in general, and Hegel also acknowledges this at times.

Furthermore, Hegel shows how both Creon and Antigone in a certain sense also support the standpoint they are fighting since their own, one-sided standpoint already contains its opposite.⁷⁶ We have just seen how Creon's standpoint indeed involves an element of taking the law as unalterable. Antigone, on the other hand, admits at certain points that there is no absolute guarantee of her interpreting the divine law correctly (even though she feels confident about her interpretation), and in that sense, she admits that she does not have unmediated or infallible access to the divine law.

However, the fact that both standpoints in principle contain their opposite does not mean that Antigone and Creon acknowledge that the other person might be in the right. The reconciliation which Hegel traces in this tragedy and which, according to him, characterizes every tragedy⁷⁷ occurs essentially not on the level of the individual characters, but on the level of Spirit.⁷⁸ This means that the one-sided standpoints of the individual characters are overcome in a higher standpoint which still contains elements of both, and which is usually represented by the Chorus. According to Hegel's reading of *Antigone*, this higher standpoint involves elements of ancient law, rich with pre-given traditions and customs, and the modern standpoint of questioning and testing all norms before accepting them. While it seems indeed plausible to characterize each of the two standpoints in this tragedy as one-sided and as implicating its opposite, the idea of a reconciliatory standpoint has at least one major disadvantage: the conflict between the two kinds or aspects of law comes to appear temporary and inessential. It is at this point that we could benefit tremendously from Luce Irigaray's readings and re-readings of

Antigone, in which she alerts us: 'In Sophocles' tragedy, the two discourses that alternate between one another, that reply to each other without any mutual understanding, belong to two different worlds whose difference has to be respected without intending to incorporate them into the higher unity of a single world'.⁷⁹

Furthermore, it is dissatisfying that the two main protagonists fall out of the picture, as it were, as both of their perspectives prove untenable. At this point, the interpretation offered by Heidegger provides a helpful supplement. Heidegger focuses on the beginning of the first choral ode which reads: '*polla ta deina kouden anthrôpou deinoteron pelei*' – 'Manifold is the uncanny, yet nothing uncanner than man bestirs itself, rising up beyond him.'⁸⁰ According to Heidegger, there is much uncanniness in the world, stemming from its character as having always already preceded us, but also and especially for the Greeks, from the ways in which nature overpowers us. 'The uncanniest (the human being) is what it is because from the ground up it deals with and conserves the familiar only in order to break out of it and to let what overwhelms it break in.'⁸¹ We strive to make ourselves at home in the midst of that which overwhelms us, and yet, we ourselves have a tendency to overstep the boundaries of the familiar. In this respect, human nature is excessive. According to Heidegger, this excessive nature is best characterized by the Greek term 'technê', translated as art, craft, power or violence – the root of technology. That is how humans contribute to crises: because we respond to uncanniness not by accepting it, but by taking it on, creating higher and higher levels of uncanniness, making our world increasingly uncanny.

It has thus been Heidegger, and not Husserl, to whom we owe an existentialist interpretation of *Antigone* that reveals a crucial structure of our existence: our concern about our existence, and the way in which we combat the world's inevitable uncanniness (or, as Derrida would put it, unreadability) in ways that tend to create higher levels of uncanniness. We encounter uncanniness as an invariant structure or shape which in each instance comes to manifest itself within historical worlds. Naturally, the ancient Greeks experienced the world's uncanniness differently from how we do, as we have created already higher levels of uncanniness.

After Heidegger's contribution to interpreting our human condition with the help of *Antigone*, what role is left for Husserl who is not interpreting *Antigone* at all? Husserl comes to criticize Heidegger's general approach to existence as too abstract, failing to consider the full existential weight of death. In turn, Husserl suggests implementing the role of death into a more general systematic account of existence, an ontology of the lifeworld (or historical world) and our role in it. This project happens by way of indications in manuscripts, the most important of which is arguably 'The Anthropological World.'⁸² In this text, Husserl outlines the project of determining the 'apriori of the lifeworld'⁸³

which is not a straightforward task, but requires a long way of phantasy variations, considering conditions for the possibility of existence and lifeworld. Husserl designates it as a 'transcendental' project, between idealism and realism in the way outlined earlier (Chapter 5, last section). It is particularly important to develop such a project 'systematically and in real concretion'.⁸⁴

World is 'time-world' (*Zeitwelt*), according to Husserl, and if we consider that time as communal is history, and that world is always shared, it is historical world, as Husserl has stated elsewhere.⁸⁵ It is part of the structure of the historical world, and thus an apriori, that individuals die while the structure of generativity prevails. Interestingly, it is at this moment that Husserl, who is often presumed not to engage much with death, writes: 'The dazzling, profound ways in which Heidegger tackles death will hardly prove acceptable to death.'⁸⁶ A strange statement. How else, then, are we to think about death? Husserl proposes that rather than focusing on our own death, we might be able to learn a phenomenological lesson from the death of others.⁸⁷

Learning about the meaning of death from the death of others is a project which again returns us to Antigone. As Luce Irigaray puts it: 'To give burial to Polynices amounts, on Antigone's part, to preserving a transcendental world not only as the world of the dead but firstly as the world of her brother, that is, of an identity different from her own.'⁸⁸ Or, as Derrida puts it with the help of a line by Paul Celan: 'The world is gone, I must carry you.'⁸⁹ Because death is, each time, the death of a world. In this way, world comes to be closely related to ethics. The different manifestations of the self and otherness that we saw in Chapter 7 can each be discussed under the heading of world: Each of us is a world, and each of us is member of many worlds.

Each of us is a world, a world which others have always already penetrated, yet a single life history nonetheless,⁹⁰ and this imposes responsibility on ourselves and others from the beginning. Thus we need to establish relations from one to the other, from the world who I am and who harbours lots of traces of otherness, to the world of the Other for which the same holds true, and yet we can relate and communicate about this shared world, the one which Derrida rightfully called 'unreadable'. Maybe our paradoxical task, in light of this, should be to read more: more stories about our history.

This also includes what Husserl calls a 'historicity of corporealities' (*Geschichtlichkeit von Leiblichkeiten*).⁹¹ Husserl discovers corporeality as an apriori of our existence in the lifeworld. But he does not consider different corporealities, or the sexuate body. Moving quickly from death to birth as the two 'ends' of our existence, he suddenly asks 'But what is birth?'⁹² He does not give an answer to this question, and he cannot; as he emphasizes, our philosophical investigations have to always begin from where we are, that is, the world we find ourselves in. For a phenomenology of birth, we will thus need female voices, and a discussion of female corporeality. This

would be a good moment to become aware of an apriori or universal structure of human existence, concerning the history of an individual: ‘In the beginning, she was’, as Irigaray puts it (in the title of her 2013 book). We all come from material bodies, and more precisely, female bodies. It would be a kind of Hegelian accomplishment, in a radicalized or unconditionally questioned form, if we learned to think our coming from maternal bodies without all (imaginatively unbearable and ontologically irrelevant) specificity and, instead, as a universal structure.

We could also say, importing our results about history as standing/streaming, this historical world will come to an end, but history and historicity as a structure (*Geschichtlichkeit*) will prevail. If we accommodate plurality and diversity in historical movements, these could well still follow dialectical patterns, and would look back at us rationally back if we look at them rationally. If both sides in a dialectic survive and try themselves in new historical shapes, there might be new conflicts, or at least new versions, and new combinations. As Luce Irigaray suggests: ‘Each period of history, each shape of consciousness, each incarnation and each human pathway are capable of teaching us something about the spiritual becoming of humanity. This does not amount to defending a nihilistic relativism, but implies the necessary ethical attention that needs to be devoted to the different ways in which humans, separate and together, can progress towards perfecting their actualization.’⁹³

How successful we are in handling crises will have a lot to do with the extent of our being able to endure diversity and resist subsuming it under one idea, principle, concept (no matter how tidy and ‘democratic’ that might seem). It will depend on thinking worlds that are ‘both open and closed’, like female corporeality.⁹⁴ That would mean to preserve both the opening of worlds and the sheltering of earth, mirrored in our speaking and bodily relations – without hierarchy, but with mutual interpenetration (always already), and with attention given to inaccessibility, ambiguity, secrecy.

It would also mean to acknowledge, with Irigaray, that the ‘divine law’ which Antigone upholds is not the law of monotheistic religion as Hegel implies, where monotheistic religions correspond to uni-linear teleology. Rather, she upholds the law of the cosmos as beautiful order, and most importantly, the order of the elements: air, water, earth, sky. Another plurality well worth exploring – if we learn to tell new stories and revive fiction as the ‘vital element of phenomenology’.⁹⁵

NOTES

1. Hegel, PhR, § 132.

2. ‘The present time has ridden itself of its barbaric nature and unlawful willfulness, and the truth has ridden itself of its beyond and its contingent violence, such that the

truthful reconciliation has become objective and helps unfold the *state* into the image and actuality of reason' (Hegel, PhR, § 360). According to the *Philosophy of Right*, the German state accomplishes the reconciliation of subjectivity and objectivity; it is determined by 'free and happy *Sittlichkeit*' (PhR, § 356). The Roman Empire is characterized by the diremption or split of *Sittlichkeit* into the extremes of private self-consciousness and abstract universality (PhR, § 357) which has to be sublated in the German state. Concerning the problems with this position which leaves out those states in which no rational concept of freedom has been realized yet, see Ludwig Siep, 'Was heißt "Aufhebung der Moralität in *Sittlichkeit*"', in Hegels Rechtsphilosophie?' ('What does "Sublation of Morality into *Sittlichkeit*" in *Hegel's Philosophy of Right* Mean?') *Hegel-Studien (Hegel Studies)* 17 [1982]: 92). It should also be noted that the state of freedom in the German state had not as such amounted to a freedom of expression on spiritual matters, and while Hegel now and then hints at some criticism, there could be reasons linked to Hegel's historical world as to why he was not more of a revolutionary and left this to the Marxists.

3. A different topic which cannot be treated here concerns the question as to whether religion exhibits some structural similarity with the more developed shape of *Sittlichkeit* and whether the religious community is similar to the *sittliche* community.

4. Within the part on *Sittlichkeit*, there is a further distinction between the family which represents the immediate shape of *Sittlichkeit*, civil society as a shape of diremption which contains elements of morality and the state as fully developed *Sittlichkeit*.

5. Hegel, Enc. III, § 513.

6. Ludwig Siep shows how the sublation of morality into *Sittlichkeit* means still giving a certain right to morality on the level of *Sittlichkeit*: Siep, 'Aufhebung'. Siep describes the position of *Sittlichkeit* in Hegel well: 'The confidence that the private and public realization of myself is overall secured in an autonomous legal, social, and cultural state must not be confused with a blind trust in any kind of state authority, law or even order.' (Siep, 'Aufhebung', 92).

7. Hegel, PhR, § 147.

8. We cannot examine here to what extent this criticism does justice to Kant's philosophy. However, Hegel's objections are rather extrinsic, so one might suspect that a response from a Kantian perspective could be formulated. The basic objection concerning an emptiness of content and the subjectivity of morality comes closer to the core of Kant's theory.

9. Hegel, PhS, 313/254.

10. Hegel, PhS, 325/262.

11. Hegel, PhS, 326f./265.

12. Hegel, PhS, 445/366.

13. Hegel, PhS, 464/383.

14. Conscience bears certain similarities with sense-certainty. Certainly, we are now concerned with an entirely different, more advanced level; we are concerned with Spirit, whereas sense-certainty relates to the individual. Yet the failure of sense-certainty to preserve its standpoint has essentially been connected to the fact that we are always in a community and conversation with others.

Another connection between sense-certainty and conscience lies in the character of beginning which both of them exhibit. Sense-certainty forms the beginning of the journey of

consciousness, and conscience forms the beginning of ethics, as it were. Hegel does not treat conscience at the very beginning of his reflections on *Sittlichkeit* and morality; but if we disregard the exact order of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* for a moment, the phenomenon of conscience proves to be an ‘earlier’ phenomenon. For example, natural consciousness frequently turns to it for explanation. Hegel’s analysis of conscience reveals – just like his analysis of sense-certainty – that there are no unconditional beginnings and that the allegedly unconditional claim of conscience does not occur out from nowhere.

At the beginning of the chapter on Spirit, we were already concerned with a law that *is* or exists – yet as a law pre-given to consciousness which consciousness had to accept. After the experience of the alienation of Spirit in *Bildung* and enlightenment, we are concerned with a law which bases its existence on the certainty of the inner world. Hegel makes reference to sense-certainty implicitly by using familiar formulations and explicitly in a comparison at the beginning of the analysis of conscience (Hegel, PhS, 467/385). H.S. Harris points out that in the moral world we are concerned with actions as ‘things’ – with multiple aspects of actions and so on –, whereas conscience returns to the beginning (H.S. Harris, *Hegel’s Ladder* [Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 1997], 460). Furthermore, Harris compares the standpoint of conscience with the moral sense philosophy developed by Shaftesbury and others: action is grounded in a moral sentiment.

15. Hegel, PhS, 466/385.

16. Hegel, PhS, 467/385.

17. Hegel, PhS, 470/388.

18. Hegel, PhS, 472/389.

19. Hegel, PhS, 476/393.

20. Hegel, PhS, 477/394.

21. Hegel, PhS, 477f./394.

22. Hegel, PhS, 478/395.

23. Hegel, PhS, 479/396.

24. H.S. Harris poses the question whether this shape has to be passed through by necessity or whether it might be possible to reach the level of reconciliation directly (Harris, *Hegel’s Ladder*, 457). To my mind, modified and softened versions of the ‘beautiful soul’ are conceivable.

25. Hegel, PhS, 484/400.

26. Hegel, PhS, 486/402.

27. Harris, *Hegel’s Ladder*, 502.

28. Hegel, PhS, 494/409.

29. The ‘Introduction’ of Husserliana Volume XXVII (in which the *Kaizo* articles are published) informs us that the editor of the Japanese journal *The Kaizo* asked Husserl for a contribution. Husserl responded to this request since it gave him the opportunity to tackle a theme which had occupied him since the end of the war: the theme of ‘renewal’, which is the translation of ‘Kaizo’. Only the first three articles were actually published, as tensions with the publisher arose (Husserl, Hua XXVII, xff.).

30. An English translation of the *Kaizo* articles is currently being prepared.

31. Donn Welton, ‘Husserl and the Japanese’, *Review of Metaphysics*, 44 (1991): 575–606.

32. Ullrich Melle describes the articles as providing an ‘incomplete and one-sided picture of Husserl’s later ethical thought’ since the theme of love is almost absent (Ullrich Melle, ‘Edmund Husserl: From Reason to Love’, in *Phenomenology: Critical Concepts*, ed. D. Moran et al. (Routledge: London, 2004), 346). To my mind, it seems dissatisfying to describe those articles on ethics which Husserl himself prepared and released for publication as one-sided. At the same time, a more encompassing interpretation of Husserl’s ethics which also considers the topic of love as it emerges particularly in his lecture courses would move him into even closer proximity to (the early) Hegel.

33. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 21.

34. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 39.

35. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 9.

36. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 83.

37. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 33.

38. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 33f.

39. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 10.

40. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 23.

41. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 25, 31.

42. Heidegger designates death as the possibility of absolute impossibility (Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, transl. J. Stambaugh [Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010], 250).

43. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 27.

44. See Manuscript E III 4, ‘Teleologie’ (‘Teleology’), p. 12a: ‘Absolute goals ... are those goals which I need to follow in order to be able to love myself.’ (*Absolute Ziele ... sind so, daß ich mich nur lieben kann, wenn ich ihnen folge.*) I would like to thank Rudolf Bernet, director of the Husserl Archives at the time of my accessing the manuscript, for his permission to quote from this manuscript.

45. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 55. The first two *Kaizo* articles belong to static phenomenology, whereas the third article, as Husserl himself announces, employs a genetic analysis. See also Welton, ‘Husserl and the Japanese’, 586.

46. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 59–94.

47. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 58.

48. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 37.

49. Hua XXVII, 60. We will leave open the question why Husserl only speaks of ‘higher developed cultures’. This restriction might be based on a restriction in his concept of religion which would presuppose the existence of a fully formulated doctrine.

50. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 61.

51. Ibid.

52. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 90.

53. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 63.

54. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 67.

55. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 73.

56. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 44.

57. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 92.

58. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 92.

59. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 43.

60. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 63.

61. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 75.

62. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 43.

63. Husserl, Hua XXVII, 54.

64. I will not be able, in this chapter, to spell out what that means. It will soon be developed in an online project at the University of Sussex, Centre for Literature and Philosophy, www.dfwallace_phenomenologicaethnography.org.

65. David Foster Wallace, *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again* (London: Abacus, 1998), 296.

66. May 1996 Interview with Charlie Rose.

67. 1996 Interview with Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR) on *Infinite Jest*.

68. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, transl. A. Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), especially 8–23.

69. See Chapter 7 and Crowell.

70. Sophocles, *Antigone*, transl. H.D.F. Kitto (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 97.

71. Sophocles, *Antigone*, 483.

72. Hegel, *PhS*, § 437.

73. Hegel, *PhS*, § 450.

74. Robert Stern explicates quite clearly how Hegel favours neither Creon nor Antigone, and how this holds for all Hegelian interpretation, in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as well as in the *Lectures on Fine Arts* and the *Lectures on Religion*. (Robert Stern, *Routledge GuideBook to Hegel and the Phenomenology of Spirit* [London: Routledge, 2002], Chapter 5).

75. Hegel, *PhR*, 132.

76. Hegel, *Aesth.*, 1217.

77. Hegel, *Aesth.*, 1215.

78. It is unfortunate and ultimately opposed to his own philosophical convictions that Hegel, in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, gives the impression that Antigone herself realizes and acknowledges her error, as if reconciliation had to involve such insights on the level of the individual (Hegel, *PhS*, § 470). To this end, Hegel misquotes Antigone. Hegel quotes her as stating: 'Because we suffer we acknowledge we have erred.' Yet Antigone actually does not state that she has erred, but: 'If this is what the gods approve, why then, When I am dead I shall discern my fault; If theirs the sin, may they endure a doom No worse than mine, so wantonly inflicted!' (Sophocles, *Antigone*, 925). For a detailed discussion of this misquote, see James Gordon Finlayson, 'Conflict and Reconciliation in Hegel's Theory of the Tragic', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, XXXVII (1999): 493–521.

79. Luce Irigaray, *In the Beginning, She Was* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 116.

80. Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, transl. G. Fried, G. et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 156.

81. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, 174.

82. Note also Husserl's comments on the significance of anthropology in Hua XXXIV where he describes anthropology as the 'philosophical first fundamental science' (*philosophisch erste Grundwissenschaft*) (Husserl, Hua XXXIV, 255).

83. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 326.
84. Ibid.
85. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 426.
86. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 332.
87. Ibid.
88. Irigaray, *In the Beginning, She Was*, 133.
89. Jacques Derrida, 'Rams: Uninterrupted Dialogue. Between Two Infinities, the Poem.' In *Sovereignties in Question. The Poetics of Paul Celan*. (Fordham University Press, New York, 2005), 136–63.
90. For a phenomenological exploration of life history, see Laszlo Tengelyi, *The Wild Region in Life-History* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2004).
91. Husserl, Hua XXIX, 334.
92. Ibid.
93. Luce Irigaray, 'Die Vermittlung des Anderen,' ('The Mediation of the Other') in *Hegel und Levinas. Kreuzungen, Brüche, Überschreitungen* (Hegel and Levinas. Crossovers, Ruptures, Transgressions), ed. B. Keintzel, B. et al. (Freiburg: Alber, 2010), 201. An interesting point at which Hegel's own considerations point to a more pluralistic direction is when he mentions, albeit in a letter, that Russia might have a "higher destiny" as she "undoubtedly bears within her womb" the potential development of spirit (Hegel *Letters* 569, cited in Eric Michael Dale, *Hegel, the End of History, and the Future* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 227.
94. Luce Irigaray, *In the Beginning, She Was*, 16.
95. Husserl, Hua III, 148 and Hua VI, 513 as discussed in Chapter 9.

Postscript: Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty

If everything 'good' is a matter of heritage. ...

Heidegger, *Being and Time*¹

Husserl had understood: our philosophical problem is to open up the concept without destroying it.

Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*²

It is through their ambiguity that philosophy and history touch.

Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*³

This postscript turns to Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty as two phenomenologists who were strongly influenced by Hegel and Husserl and who shared their interest in the problem of historical worlds. It is obviously impossible to explore their ideas on philosophical beginning in the form of a postscript. An equally impossible task would consist in investigating Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's criticism of Hegel and Husserl. Instead, this postscript aims at opening up some lines of thought regarding the problem of beginning which emerge from the thought of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. These thoughts develop and deepen certain questions addressed to Hegel and Husserl which have emerged during the course of the present study.

At certain points in this study, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty came briefly into play, especially where phenomena of withdrawal and concealment are concerned. Hegel and Husserl, in contrast, embark more explicitly on the quest for (complete) transparency. This creates tensions in their projects, especially concerning the possibility of undertaking philosophy as a science while taking history seriously. Accordingly, this postscript will focus on

phenomena which overcome us (such as moods) and which complicate the quest for transparency through the intervention of shadows and ambiguity.

HEIDEGGER ON PHILOSOPHY AND MOODS

Heidegger has commented extensively on Hegel's philosophy, especially the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and in a different way, on Husserl's main concepts. Yet for our topic of moods, these interpretations and commentaries are only partially relevant. Moreover, due to their complexity, these commentaries require a careful discussion which cannot be accomplished here. The situation between Husserl and Heidegger is so intricate that it is not even possible to provide general comments;⁴ what seems certain is that their at times rather harsh rejections of the other's method and approach cannot be taken at face value but point to a deeper level of mutual indebtedness.

Despite the focus on moods, I will start with a brief reference to one of the most well-known points of critique which Heidegger raises in relation to Hegel's concept of time. Time is a difficult topic already because it is such a broad theme, and essential to both Hegel and Heidegger. Furthermore, Heidegger discusses Hegel's concept of time in a prominent place, close to the very end of *Being and Time*. Heidegger claims that he is not criticizing Hegel and that Hegel's philosophy of time is very important, especially since Hegel's concept presents 'the most radical' and not sufficiently recognized version of the 'vulgar understanding' of time.⁵ It is hard to deny that this claim is a form of critique; yet we may presume that in his earlier statement about not criticizing Hegel, Heidegger employs a more traditional or everyday concept of critique.

The most relevant aspect of the discussion, as far as our topic is concerned, is the fact that Heidegger claims Hegel's conception of time to be the most radical version of the natural attitude. The arguments Heidegger raises for this claim are too complex to be discussed here; let it suffice to say that the first argument examines how Hegel's concept of time is modelled after his concept of space such that time turns into a series of 'now-points', first reducing the 'now' to a point and then reducing future and past to the 'now' (and thus to a point). If Hegel's concept of time is indeed a version of the natural attitude, thus objectifying time, it cannot allow for an existential understanding of time. Accordingly, Hegel's concept of history would also not be able to do justice to our human existence in its character of 'happening' (*Geschehnis*). It is important for Heidegger to outline his own position in relation to Hegel here since his own analysis of historicity (*Geschichtlichkeit*) culminates in the notion of world history (*Welt-Geschichte*) which evokes Hegelian associations which Heidegger would reject. Heidegger's claim about Hegel's

conception of time as a version of the natural attitude has various implications; in light of Husserl's criticism regarding the natural sciences as a higher version of the natural attitude, it would even become questionable whether Hegel's concept of time allows us to enter into philosophy.

Yet despite the fact that Hegel, according to Heidegger, objectifies time, he manages to understand the dynamic process of experience (*Erfahrung*) very well – as a process which we undergo rather than bring about. This passive element is relevant for the question of beginning which Hegel also treats quite appropriately, according to Heidegger. The paradoxical character of philosophy's beginning as that which can neither be accomplished from within nor from without becomes manifest in the restlessness of the Absolute. According to Heidegger, 'absolute restlessness' is the 'character and way in which the Absolute is'.⁶ Heidegger stresses Hegel's important insight that the Absolute is already with us; it would certainly not be in our powers to bring about this experience by ourselves. The relation with the Absolute signifies the most extreme case of an experience which we cannot accomplish; any claims to the contrary would testify to the utmost hubris.

Hegel thus rightly points out that the beginning is something we undergo. Heidegger pursues this line of thought further when he makes a distinction between 'beginning' and 'outset', a distinction which he ties to the ancient Greeks but which has wider consequences. 'Outset refers to the coming forth of this thinking at a definite "time"'.⁷ Heidegger clarifies that he means not so much the actual date in calendar time, but rather the situation of the human being during a particular age. Nevertheless, this concept is much more extrinsic to thought than the notion of beginning. 'The "beginning" is what, in this early thinking, is to be thought and is what is thought'.⁸ Although thinking might first give an impression of activity, Heidegger shows that thought is something which comes to us (or stays away). Even in the case of the early Greek philosophers, the beginning 'is not something dependent on the favour of these thinkers, where they are active in such and such a way, but, rather, the reverse: the beginning is that which begins something with these thinkers – by laying a claim on them'.⁹ The passivity at the core of beginning is thus confirmed.

What is the beginning as that which is to be thought? Heidegger maintains that it is Being which is to be thought, and that the early Greek thinkers began by 'retreating in the face of Being'.¹⁰ Such sentences cannot really be understood out of context, to be sure. But it is interesting to see the proximity between this and the way in which, following Husserl, the Greek emergence of philosophy might be inspired by wonder in the face of the alienworld (as we have seen in Chapter 6). It has also sometimes been suggested that 'world' in the phenomenological sense and 'Being' are very closely related, if not identical.¹¹ In that sense, Husserl and Heidegger might be very close here; but does 'retreat' signify wonder?

The topic of moods will be explored in some detail since it appears to be the most significant corrective which Heidegger brings about in relation to both Hegel and Husserl. Heidegger examines the relevance of moods to philosophy much more thoroughly than Hegel or even Husserl. He also thematizes the relation between different moods – wonder, awe, anxiety and others – which are to different degrees connected with philosophy. A few general insights from Heidegger's phenomenology of moods will be recalled here before turning to the connection between moods and philosophy. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger shows that our common understanding of moods as subjective and unreliable is superficial and ultimately wrong. Moods are not an occasional experience; rather, we always have a mood, even if this mood is just indifference (which we tend to mistake for the absence of moods). Furthermore, a mood 'comes neither from "outside" nor from "inside", but arises out of Being-in-the-world'.¹² A mood is not just dependent on the subject, on my personality and disposition; otherwise, my moods would be much more stable. Yet moods are not entirely object-dependent either; different people are affected differently by the same object or situation.

Heidegger distinguishes between moods (or everyday moods) and fundamental moods. Fundamental moods are not concerned with a specific object, but with the world which becomes revealed in a certain way. Fundamental moods are moods which determine our world as a whole, and when the mood is revealed to us, it reveals the world. The most prominent mood in *Being and Time* is anxiety. Whereas fear is caused by a specific object, anxiety means that nothing in the world can provide a hold. In and through this experience, 'Being-anxious discloses, primordially and directly, the world as world'¹³ – not on the level of cognition, but on the level of moods. As everything in the world loses significance, we become aware of the fact that we usually rely on the world which we take for granted and which seems to be our home, but which is on the most fundamental level uncanny.

Is anxiety a mood that instigates philosophy? In *The Transcendence of the Ego*, Jean-Paul Sartre suggests that anxiety in Heidegger could have a function similar to the *epoché* in Husserl since it creates a distance between us and the world which allows us to focus on the world as such. As a result, 'the *epoché* is no longer a miracle, an intellectual method, an erudite procedure: it is an anxiety which is imposed on us and which we cannot avoid: it is both a pure event of transcendental origin and an ever possible accident in our daily life'.¹⁴ I have two reservations about this suggestion while at the same time appreciating Sartre's general impetus of connecting the *epoché* to moods. Although Sartre rightly points out that the connection between the *epoché* and moods shows that the *epoché* is not a matter of pure decision or will, the connection as presented by Sartre goes too far since he equates the *epoché* with the mood that brings it about. He claims that the *epoché* 'is an anxiety'.

My two reservations concern this equating of the *epoché* with a mood, on the one hand, and the link between the *epoché* and anxiety, on the other.

Concerning the equation of the *epoché* with a mood, it can be helpful to remember the dispute between Fink and Husserl. In response to Fink's discussion of the problem of motivation and his insistence that the natural attitude is self-sufficient, we have seen how Fink and Husserl can be read together rather than against one another (Chapter 6). Fink would then be justified in claiming that there is no motivation for the *epoché* within the natural attitude, and he would also be right that wonder in the face of the world can instigate the *epoché* only if such wonder *also* concerns the homeworld. However, the encounter with the alien can still inspire the *epoché* (as suggested in Husserl's late manuscripts) since such wonder reflects back on the homeworld, as it were, and shakes up our familiar conceptions. In any case, the *epoché* is not an inevitable result of such an encounter, but requires that we respond to wonder, as Fink points out. Therefore, Husserl's description of the *epoché* as a matter of decision or will has a certain justification, but does not give the full picture. A response requires the willingness to respond, yet the willingness itself is not sufficient. Sartre's statement thus contains some helpful elements, but does not do justice to the complexity of the situation.

Second, it strikes me as questionable to bring anxiety and the *epoché* too close together. Both Heidegger and Husserl would have resisted this suggestion vehemently, and even though Husserl's rejection of the method in Heidegger's *Being and Time* might appear somewhat exaggerated, there is good reason for resistance where the link between anxiety and *epoché* is concerned. Heidegger does not present anxiety as the mood from which phenomenological investigations start. Without entering into the difficult relation between authenticity and inauthenticity which becomes revealed through anxiety,¹⁵ our response to anxiety does not seem to be an engagement in philosophical examination. Also, it would definitely appear strange to link anxiety to the ancient Greek beginning.

Instead, Heidegger designates wonder as the fundamental mood belonging to the Greek beginning of philosophy, following Plato and Aristotle (and in line with Husserl). The relation between wonder and anxiety can be described in a schematic fashion. While wonder is a response to the realization that there is something rather than nothing, anxiety describes the way in which the nothing threatens the 'there is'. It is then not surprising that wonder (rather than anxiety) would provide an impulse to philosophize.¹⁶ Yet there is an historical dimension which the schematic approach brackets. Heidegger claims that wonder is the mood of the first beginning, but not the fundamental mood of our present world. If a beginning is to be possible for us today, then the corresponding fundamental mood of this 'other beginning' might be startled dismay (*Erschrecken*), reservedness (*Verhaltenheit*) or awe (*Scheu*).¹⁷

The question of the 'first' and the 'other' beginning cannot be taken up here since it is a very complex topic. We might be allowed to think of the 'other beginning' as *our* beginning which is, however, not brought about by us and which always remains tied back to the first beginning. Although Heidegger does not conceive of wonder as the fundamental mood of our time, it is essentially connected to the fundamental mood of the other beginning. He repeatedly brings up wonder in the context of those fundamental moods pertaining to the other beginning, and he tells us that what startled dismay means might best be made clear by opposing it to wonder. Despite and because of their opposition, wonder and startled dismay are essentially connected. Ultimately, there is only one fundamental mood which comes to appearance in different ways, depending on the historical times.

One of the challenges of Heidegger's thought is the realization that beginning is not anything we can effect ourselves; however, this does not imply that we do not need to do anything. Every beginning must be repeated continually; we misunderstand beginning if we think of it as something altogether new. At the same time, 'only what is unique is retrievable and repeatable'.¹⁸ To think beginning in this way means to take history seriously. History harbours the paradox of the beginning as unique *and* repeatable. Overall, history consists of events which cannot be repeated as such; and yet, they affect our current state in such a way that we need to repeat them by taking them up anew and responding to them, especially if they constitute beginnings or *Stiftungen*.

Heidegger reveals the significance of moods for philosophy. While Husserl sometimes proposes a model of different phenomenal levels where moods or affects seem to belong to a higher level than cognition, Heidegger emphasizes that moods reach as far and as deep down as cognition, and that we are never without a mood. It turns out that philosophical inquiry depends on a mood rather than preceding it. Furthermore, Heidegger highlights and examines the connection between moods and history. The way in which the beginning of philosophy is not at our disposal is thus brought to the fore.

The emphasis on that which is inaccessible or non-transparent also determines Heidegger's explicit criticism of Husserl which concerns such central topics as consciousness (versus *Dasein*), Husserl's Cartesianism and others. It is striking that several interpreters have shown how Husserl can be rescued from the most important aspects of Heidegger's critique, whether they regard truth, intentionality, world or the transcendental ego.¹⁹ Since these interesting studies indeed concern the themes which are most central to both Husserl and Heidegger, the impression that Heidegger's critique is not 'fair' is confirmed. The misunderstandings certainly seem to be mutual, and it is tempting to explain them in a semi-personal fashion since it is quite obvious that the blind spots on both sides are related to high hopes and subsequent disappointment.

Rather than following and examining Heidegger's criticism of Husserl with the aim of redeeming Husserl or responding on his behalf, I have focused on

the topic of moods which becomes relevant in Husserl's late philosophy when he discusses the problem of motivation. Heidegger clearly examines moods in more detail, and he shows their essential role for our existence. Overall, it seems to me that Heidegger's explicit criticism of Husserl might be less instructive than the more implicit ways in which Heidegger alerts us to phenomena which Husserl considered only marginally.

At the same time, it is tempting to approach their relation head on, as it were, and concentrate on their definitions of phenomenology. Although Heidegger's phenomenology is often characterized on the basis of what he calls the formal conception of phenomenology, namely, 'to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself',²⁰ Heidegger follows up with a phenomenological conception of phenomenology which attends to the phenomenon in the 'distinctive' sense:

What is it that must be called a 'phenomenon' in a distinctive sense? ... Manifestly, it is something that proximally and for the most part does not show itself at all: it is something that lies *concealed* in contrast to that which proximally and for the most part does show itself; but at the same time it is something that belongs to what thus shows itself, indeed in such a way that it constitutes its meaning and ground.²¹

In the context of *Being and Time*, that which lies hidden while serving as the ground for what shows itself is Being. The Being of beings provides the ground and meaning which allows beings to appear. But it becomes obvious that already in *Being and Time*, there are other phenomena which fit this description, for example, the world, but also, in a different way, fundamental moods such as anxiety, which remains concealed for the most part but allows various individual fears to come to the fore.

Husserl also encounters that which is hidden; by no means is he merely a phenomenologist of the static perception of spatiotemporal objects. His analyses of passive synthesis and of embodiment constitute investigations of those phenomena which for the most part do not show themselves. Nevertheless, Husserl does not examine the hidden *as* hidden. When Heidegger sets out to examine truth as un-concealment, fundamental moods, or the earth as that which essentially remains hidden, he thematizes the methodological difficulties of such examinations, difficulties which are created by the phenomena in question. For example, Heidegger shows that phenomenology (rather than psychology or cultural analysis) is the appropriate method for investigating moods, and that phenomenology manages to overcome some basic misunderstandings about moods as either entirely subjective or entirely objective. It is necessary to go back behind the ways in which moods first appear to us; phenomenology needs to hold true to its principle to investigate that which remains hidden as the meaning and ground for that which

shows itself. In the case of moods, this methodological principle leads us to fundamental moods which are not concerned with a specific object but which determine our world as a whole. The mood of wonder alerts us to the world which otherwise remains unthematic; it thus allows us to start philosophizing.

Although the brief considerations on mood undertaken in this postscript are linked more obviously to Husserl than to Hegel, Heidegger also alludes to mood in his reading of Hegel. Hegel mentions feeling or mood in relation to the beginning, as the 'feeling of violence' which natural consciousness experiences when it is forced to go beyond itself.²² Heidegger highlights this statement in his text 'Hegel's Concept of Experience'; it strikes him as remarkable in light of Hegel's overall emphasis on reason and rationality.²³ Hegel does not elaborate on this statement and reduces its impact somewhat by pointing out that natural consciousness ultimately suffers this violence at its own hands; nevertheless, the feeling of violence and the anxiety it causes are altogether real. Despite the fact that the internal contradictions which lead natural consciousness beyond (or more deeply into) itself belong to consciousness, it cannot bring about the beginning by itself. We have seen earlier that Hegel links the emergence of philosophy in ancient Greece with an experience of crisis as the rupture between inner and outer reality (Chapter 6).

Heidegger's focus on the 'Introduction' to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* confirms that he finds Hegel's struggle with the problems of beginning most inspiring. Not only is the important concept of experience in its connection to passivity (and thus *pathos*) of interest to Heidegger, but also the discussion of despair, vanity, sentimentality and so on, in their different roles with regard to a philosophical beginning. Moods play a role in bringing about the philosophical beginning, but they can also stand in the way of it, since our resistance to philosophy, or to questioning our familiar assumptions, becomes manifest in moods like despair (as the fear of leaving a familiar place), vanity (as the insistence on our convictions) and sentimentality (as nostalgia for the familiarity of the natural attitude). A strong interest in the 'Introduction' to the *Phenomenology* also determines Merleau-Ponty's engagement with Hegel to which we will now turn.

MERLEAU-PONTY ON PHILOSOPHY AND NON-PHILOSOPHY

The title of Merleau-Ponty's final lecture course at the Collège de France (1960–61), 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Hegel', has inspired a number of books and articles on Merleau-Ponty.²⁴ Not only does Merleau-Ponty have a special genius for titles (and formulations in general), but this

title does indeed point to a central and significant theme in his philosophy. In examining philosophy's relation to non-philosophy, Merleau-Ponty actually claims that 'true philosophy is non-philosophy'.²⁵ Moreover, he derives such insights from Hegel's philosophy and specifically from the 'Introduction' to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

The lecture course 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Hegel' is particularly relevant for our question because of the themes which determine Merleau-Ponty's reading of Hegel: reversal/reversibility and ambiguity. These themes are very important, arguably the most important themes for Merleau-Ponty's own philosophy.²⁶ However, Merleau-Ponty does not simply impose these themes on Hegel; he finds them in Hegel, as central components of Hegel's philosophy (albeit through a somewhat subversive reading, at least in the case of ambiguity). If the interpretation suggested here is successful, this means that Merleau-Ponty's main themes of reversibility and ambiguity rely on Hegelian inspirations. Yet our main focus at this point does not concern the emergence of Merleau-Ponty's philosophical project; it is much narrower, as it concerns the ways in which his reflections on the issue of beginning shed new light on Hegel and Husserl.

Provisionally, Merleau-Ponty's main claims concerning our question can be summarized as follows: Hegel's dialectical philosophy at the time of writing the 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit* is necessarily a phenomenology. The *Phenomenology* reveals the *reversibility* of consciousness, where consciousness is understood in and through its experience. Moreover, it discloses this experience as imbued with (good) *ambiguity*. One might even say that for Merleau-Ponty, Hegel's philosophy uncovers the reversibility and – somewhat despite Hegel's intentions – the ambiguity of experience. These close connections between Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the topics of reversibility and ambiguity need to be unfolded.

The topics of reversal and reversibility emerge when Hegel explains his dialectical phenomenological method as a 'reversal (*Umkehrung*) of consciousness itself'.²⁷ Following Hegel's 'Introduction' to the *Phenomenology*, Merleau-Ponty identifies a series of reversals which turn out to be different perspectives regarding one and the same reversal of consciousness. Hegel states that consciousness has to try and walk on its head; this rather metaphorical reversal expresses a fundamental 'intertwining of subject and object', a 'chiasm' or reversibility of subject and object.²⁸ The subject turns out to be the object and vice versa. More carefully considered in the terms of the 'Introduction', we realize that the object of our philosophical investigation is consciousness along with its object, that is, subject and object as intertwined with one another. When internal contradictions emerge and consciousness changes its attitude towards its object, a change in subject and object is effected. Merleau-Ponty is particularly interested in those Hegelian

statements which reveal that it is one and the same change that we need to describe from two different perspectives.

This reversal has implications for the nature of consciousness and for the nature of philosophy. It turns out that “reversal” is in the nature of consciousness; yet without philosophy, consciousness cannot take ‘possession of its own reversal’.²⁹ Thus the role of the philosopher consists not in effecting a reversal of consciousness but in recognizing the inherent reversibility and reversal of consciousness, that is, the intertwining of subject and object. When Merleau-Ponty expands on his own notion of reversibility in *The Visible and the Invisible*, he does not describe reversibility in terms of consciousness; yet the phenomenon described is quite similar. Merleau-Ponty aims to give expression to the ways in which the visible is more than a correlative of my vision and the touchable more than a correlative of my touch.³⁰ Vision and the visible, touch and the touchable cross over; they are intertwined.

Although Merleau-Ponty would overall object to the language of consciousness in Hegel’s *Phenomenology*, he regards the 1807 project as superior to Hegel’s later philosophy. At the same time, it is a paradoxical project: ‘The Hegelian philosophy of 1807 ... excludes the utterance. Once uttered, it returns to identity.’³¹ Utterance turns Hegel’s philosophy into ‘something said’; it interrupts the movement of reversal. Hegel’s philosophy of 1807 is unique precisely because it cannot be fixated in this way. It is concerned with a ‘living “ambiguity”’ which evades utterance.³² Living ambiguity helps to explicate the role of experience in Hegel. While it might first seem that experience lends itself easily to report and narration, it turns out that such utterance stalls the dynamic character of experience and dissolves ambiguity into a one-sided representation.

For the notion of ambiguity, Merleau-Ponty can again rely on the text of Hegel’s ‘Introduction’. Hegel mentions the ‘ambiguity (*Zweideutigkeit*) of this truth’,³³ where the truth consists in the reversal between subject and object or the way in which the consciousness of an object turns into the object of consciousness, as the object of investigation. Since this reversal is a fundamental component of the *Phenomenology*, Merleau-Ponty comes to conclude that ‘ambiguity is essential to the dialectic’, and as a result ‘there is no immanence; there is truly apprenticeship’.³⁴ Of course, ambiguity and reversibility become subversive elements for any system of philosophy; only the *Phenomenology*, not the *Science of Logic*, can reveal them.

Dialectic is thus an expression of the inherent reversibility of consciousness. This reversibility does not come to a close; the ambiguity of consciousness is not transitory but essential. Yet is not Hegel the thinker of reconciliation and the Absolute? Merleau-Ponty does not evade these themes but faces them as directly as possible; the Absolute plays an important role in

his Hegel lectures. In line with the emphasis on reversal, he embraces Hegel's insights into the circularity that determines the pathway of consciousness. The end is the beginning, hence 'there is no introduction to the Absolute: we are there'.³⁵ The absolute is not something external which we desperately try to reach; the Absolute is where we always already are.

However, in light of other texts, Merleau-Ponty's position may need to be phrased more carefully, especially where the possibility of absolute knowing is concerned. In his essay 'Everywhere and Nowhere', Merleau-Ponty points out that various aspects of Hegel's philosophy appear to stand and fall with the possibility of our having attained absolute knowing, or at least the possibility that absolute knowing is attainable: 'If we do not in fact have it [i.e., absolute knowledge], our entire evaluation of other cultures must be re-examined.'³⁶ Independently of how we assess Hegel's evaluations of other cultures (which cannot really be our focus here because it has not been a major theme of this study), this statement criticizes Hegel's philosophy for making the attainment of absolute knowing a prerequisite.

According to Merleau-Ponty, Hegel presumes that he has himself reached the standpoint of absolute knowledge.³⁷ This personalized statement seems somewhat simplistic – yet it points to the problem which 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Hegel' addresses only very indirectly: the problem of closure. We have concluded earlier (Chapter 9) that it lies in the nature of Hegel's philosophy to aim at a point of closure rather than an open ending. Does Merleau-Ponty disagree? No clear answer can be given on the basis of the two texts considered here. It might first seem that his standpoint in 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Hegel' diverges from 'Everywhere and Nowhere' or that his conclusion would depend on his focus in reading Hegel's philosophy. But can Hegel's philosophy present itself so differently from different perspectives?

We need to keep in mind that according to Merleau-Ponty, Hegel's philosophy of 1807 cannot be uttered. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a paradoxical project and for this reason Merleau-Ponty appreciates it; it allows for the expression of reversibility and ambiguity. In 'Everywhere and Nowhere', Merleau-Ponty is concerned with Hegel's philosophy as a whole and especially with the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* and Hegel's attitude towards Oriental thought. He criticizes Hegel's attempt to reveal a concrete universal against which other cultures could be measured by their 'degree of transparency' and thus by their capability to elucidate ambiguity.³⁸ This critique allows him to relate Hegel and Husserl to one another. According to Merleau-Ponty, Husserl's *Crisis* sets out on Hegel's way. However, 'Husserl had understood: our philosophical problem is to open up the concept without destroying it'.³⁹ This openness can be traced in Hegel's project of 1807, but not in Hegel's later philosophy. Yet this does not diminish the

important results about reversal and ambiguity which can be found in the *Phenomenology*.

Husserl, to whom we will now turn, also sometimes fails to see his own project clearly, according to Merleau-Ponty. Most famous in this context is Merleau-Ponty's statement in the 'Preface' to his *Phenomenology of Perception*: 'The most important lesson which the reduction teaches us is the impossibility of a complete reduction.'⁴⁰ What does this statement mean? Merleau-Ponty's 'Preface' presents the state of Husserlian phenomenology as a state of tensions and even contradictions. Phenomenology wants to describe our actual experience of the world, but it also wants to be a science – those dilemmas are familiar from Husserl's own descriptions in his various introductions to phenomenology such as *Ideas I* or the *Crisis*. At times, Husserl even identifies a paradox;⁴¹ yet his solution of the paradox usually reveals that it was not a true paradox to start with.

From Merleau-Ponty's perspective, Husserl does not sufficiently acknowledge the complexity of the dilemmas involved in founding phenomenology as a rigorous science. Merleau-Ponty follows the inspiration of Husserl's phenomenological project but deems it most important to reflect on the limits of this project. According to Merleau-Ponty, we need to realize that 'phenomenology can be practiced and identified as a manner or style of thinking, that it existed as a movement before arriving at complete awareness of itself as a philosophy'.⁴² Phenomenology is 'on the way', and it has been on the way for a long time – 'since Hegel'.⁴³

Although Merleau-Ponty reflects on the phenomenological method and outlines how Husserl's claims should be qualified, he considers it justified to practice phenomenology even if the 'complete awareness of itself as a philosophy' has not been attained (and perhaps never will be). Since Husserl also tended to practice a certain kind of phenomenology before striving to formulate it as a method (e.g. genetic phenomenology) he could be in agreement with Merleau-Ponty, it seems. It is questionable whether Husserl ever gave a final formulation of his method, hence Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the character of phenomenology as perpetual beginning.

At the same time, Merleau-Ponty's remarks aim to critique Husserl, not just to confirm and emphasize certain points. According to Merleau-Ponty, phenomenology needs to be honest about the fact that it will never be able to fully account for the fact that there is a world and that a complete reduction is impossible. It is significant for understanding the impossibility of a complete reduction to consider the immediately preceding sentence, which is less memorable than the statement about the reduction, but more illuminating: 'All the misunderstandings with his interpreters, with the existentialist "dissidents" and finally with himself, have arisen from the fact that in order to see the world and grasp it as paradoxical, we must break with our familiar acceptance

of it and, also, from the fact that from this break we can learn nothing but the unmotivated upsurge of the world.⁴⁴ This sentence contains several claims. First, it reveals that the problems which occur in interpreting Husserl's phenomenology are misunderstandings – including misunderstandings on the side of Husserl himself. Second, it announces that there is something paradoxical about the world. Finally, Merleau-Ponty claims that all we learn from the break with our familiar acceptance of the world is the 'unmotivated upsurge of the world'. The paradox of the world consists in the fact that even though we give sense to the world (and in fact, the phenomenological concept of world is essentially 'sense'),⁴⁵ the world can never be fully brought to immanence. There is always an excess, a remainder of the 'there is (world)' which we cannot account for. The 'unmotivated upsurge of the world' describes the same excess, yet with an additional implication: the break with our familiar acceptance of the world must ultimately also be unmotivated or else it cannot be fully accounted for. Merleau-Ponty refers us to Fink whose talk of "wonder" in the face of the world' would be the 'best formulation of the reduction'.⁴⁶ We have seen that Fink can rely on Husserl's own manuscripts for this idea and that it is possible to argue for a connection between wonder and the Greek encounter with the alien. Wonder in the face of the alienworld might have been a motivation for the emergence of philosophy in ancient Greece, and it might even serve as a motivation for us nowadays. However, we can never bring about this wonder, nor can we fully account for it.

The remainder or excess of the phenomenological account will remain significant for Merleau-Ponty. In his famous essay 'The Philosopher and His Shadow', the remainder comes under the heading of shadow; it is an essential shadow, or a shadow 'which is not simply the factual absence of future light'.⁴⁷ It is that which resists phenomenology, yet which should nevertheless 'have its place within it'.⁴⁸ Merleau-Ponty deems it an important part of his phenomenological project to approach this shadow indirectly; this is a significant corrective to Husserl's project which he proposes (and takes up in his own philosophy under the heading of 'brute Being').

Although Merleau-Ponty implies that Husserl did not sufficiently attend to the shadow which every philosopher must bear, the essay 'The Philosopher and His Shadow' is not a critical essay per se. Rather, Merleau-Ponty explains and justifies certain components of the Husserlian project very effectively, including the methodological elements of the *epoché* or reduction. Perhaps in response to his earlier remark about the impossibility of a complete reduction, Merleau-Ponty points out that it is 'not through chance or naiveté that Husserl assigns contradictory characteristics to reduction'.⁴⁹ The reduction should not be assessed in terms of a success or failure on Husserl's part. When correctly understood, the reduction is not a series of steps prior to phenomenology, but already part of the phenomenological inquiry. This

means that the question as to how the reduction should be performed is itself a matter of phenomenological inquiry open for discussion and improvement by Husserl and others.

In all the texts to which we have briefly referred here, it is striking to see how frequently Merleau-Ponty places Hegel and Husserl in close proximity to each other, despite statements like the following from 'Everywhere and Nowhere' in which Husserl's openness is contrasted with Hegel's idea of absolute knowing. The proximity becomes manifest on a formal level, as it were, since Hegel and Husserl are often mentioned in one and the same sentence or two subsequent sentences.⁵⁰ Yet more importantly, the proximity concerns various philosophical insights. Three themes in particular shall be mentioned here in concluding: the circular relation between natural and philosophical consciousness, the reversibility between immanence and transcendence and the significance of the consideration of temporality or process.

- (a) The relation between natural and philosophical consciousness is no straightforward transition from one to the other, but a circular movement that examines natural consciousness by entering more deeply into it. In Merleau-Ponty's illuminating words, 'It is the natural attitude itself which goes beyond itself in phenomenology – and so it does not go beyond itself.'⁵¹ This means that the relation between the natural and the transcendental attitudes is 'not simple' and should not be thought of like the relation between 'the apparent and the true'.⁵² The same holds for phenomenology in Hegel's sense where we are asked to admit that, 'as Hegel said, to retire into oneself is also to leave oneself'.⁵³ Hegel brings out the paradoxical element of this relation more clearly (because he asks us to think of the principle of non-contradiction as sublated); yet it is also Hegel who runs the risk of hiding this paradox in absolute knowing.
- (b) When Merleau-Ponty explains the reversibility of consciousness which Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* reveals, he claims that 'in Husserl, intentionality also has this meaning'⁵⁴ – namely, the meaning of reversibility or exchange. Intentionality in Husserl's sense does not just mean that consciousness is consciousness of something and that it is dynamically directed at its object. It also means that consciousness can reflect on itself and become its own object. In this process, consciousness changes by way of its insights into the phenomena. For Merleau-Ponty, the reversibility of consciousness concerns an exchange between subject and object or between myself and the world. Perception is not a unidirectional process. It might seem as if Merleau-Ponty has imposed this bidirectionality on Hegel and Husserl.⁵⁵ Yet in Hegel's case, the dialectical process itself depends on bidirectional reversibility; the realization regarding the complexity of the object indeed leads to a substantial modification of

consciousness at each level. The reversibility of intentionality in Husserl becomes particularly obvious when he examines attention and the 'allure' (*Reiz*) which issues from the object – and for him these are paradigmatic phenomena. So Merleau-Ponty's interpretation can build on a secure basis in Hegel and Husserl, and yet he brings out this reversibility more explicitly and clearly.

- c) According to Merleau-Ponty, one of the most significant insights which we owe to both Hegel and Husserl concerns the temporality at the centre of experience. For Hegel, 'time is the existence of Spirit'.⁵⁶ Spirit and consciousness can only exist as they unfold in time (– until time is annulled and yet preserved). Husserl examines the 'self-constitution of time'⁵⁷ since consciousness is time-consciousness which temporalizes (*zeitigt*) itself. In this process of temporalization, consciousness constitutes itself, but it also experiences withdrawal and evasion. Temporality is not in our control. Even less in our control is historicity as the more concrete, communal temporal dimension.

Despite all possible criticism regarding Hegel's concept of history, it remains true that Merleau-Ponty is indebted to Hegel (and Husserl) in his own attention to history, which determines several of his essays as well as his political writings. Philosophy and history are intertwined, and as Merleau-Ponty points out, 'it is through their ambiguity that philosophy and history touch'.⁵⁸ It is this ambiguity which both Hegel and Husserl encounter as they take history seriously. However, in their projects to found phenomenology as a science, it becomes difficult to thematize this ambiguity as such.

We have turned to Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty in order to consider certain responses to Hegel and Husserl which confirm some of the criticisms directed against the project of philosophy as a science and against the idea of philosophical consciousness as potentially self-transparent. The shape which this criticism takes in Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty reflects the high level of complexity which these issues require. In many places, Hegel and Husserl were more aware of the open, ambiguous or paradoxical character of experience than is often assumed. Nevertheless, they do not thematize the implications of openness, concealment or ambiguity to the same extent as Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. Such a project would be concerned with essential shadows, remainders and elements of concealment which a phenomenology cannot dissolve, but which it can still reflect upon, in such a way that the possibilities and limits of phenomenology shine forth. Several of the references to Levinas and Derrida throughout the study served to show

such concealment in the phenomena that we encounter in the historical world, shared with others through language and yet always enigmatic.

NOTES

1. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, transl. J. Stambaugh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 383/351.
2. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, transl. R. McCleary (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 138.
3. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, 132.
4. For a good discussion with many passages from Husserl's letters, see Welton (2000), p. 120 ff.
5. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 428/392.
6. Martin Heidegger, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, transl. P. Emad et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 51.
7. Martin Heidegger, *Parmenides*, transl. A. Schuwer et al. (London: John Wiley, 1998), 7.
8. Ibid.
9. Heidegger, *Parmenides*, 7f.
10. Heidegger, *Parmenides*, 7.
11. Klaus Held, 'Husserl und die Griechen' ('Husserl and the Greeks'), *Phänomenologische Forschungen*, (Phenomenological Research) 22 (1989).
12. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 136/128.
13. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 187/175.
14. Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego: Sketch for a Phenomenological Description* (London: Routledge, 2011), 103.
15. I explore this topic in 'Unambiguous Calling? Authenticity and Ethics in Heidegger's *Being and Time*', *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 39, no. 2 (2008): 293–313.
16. Klaus Held has shown that Heidegger neglects the significance of wonder, and that the one-sided emphasis on anxiety creates difficulties for Heidegger in thinking the other beginning. (Klaus Held, 'Fundamental Moods and Heidegger's Critique of Contemporary Culture', in *Commemorations: Reading Heidegger from the Start*, ed. J. Sallis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).
17. Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie. (Vom Ereignis)* (*Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*) (1936–38). Gesamtausgabe Band 65 (Frankfurt a.M.: Klostermann, 1989), 22/16.
18. Heidegger, *Beiträge*, 55/39.
19. I would like to give a few examples to show that there are indeed numerous such interpretations, older and more recent. Perhaps most famously, Ernst Tugendhat maintains that Husserl's concept of truth is superior to Heidegger's since several problems arise from Heidegger's 'expanded' (*entschränkt*) concept of truth. (Ernst Tugendhat, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger* (*The Concept of Truth in Husserl and Heidegger*) [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970]). Lilian Alweiss argues that

Cartesianism cannot and should not be dismissed as easily as is attempted by Heidegger, and that Husserl's philosophy more than Heidegger's allows us to reclaim the world (Lilian Alweiss, *The World Unclaimed: A Challenge to Heidegger's Critique of Husserl* [Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003]). Sebastian Luft examines the Husserlian notion of the 'transcendental person', claiming that it provides a direct response to Heidegger's criticism regarding the emptiness of the transcendental ego and thus provides a viable alternative to Heidegger's notion of 'Dasein' (Sebastian Luft, 'Husserl's Concept of the 'Transcendental Person': Another Look at the Husserl-Heidegger Relationship', *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 13, no. 2 (2005): 141–77). There are several other discussions of essential themes in this relationship, such as examination of Husserlian intentionality in light of Heidegger's critique (Steve Crowell, *Husserl, Heidegger, and the Space of Meaning: Paths toward Transcendental Phenomenology* [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001]).

20. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 34/30.

21. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 35/31.

22. Hegel, PhS, 51/74.

23. Heidegger, *Hegel's Concept*, 149.

24. Aside from Hugh Silverman's collection *Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Merleau-Ponty* which contains Merleau-Ponty's lecture notes 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Hegel', there is, for example, Françoise Dastur's essay 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy according to Merleau-Ponty'.

25. Merleau-Ponty, 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Hegel', in *Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Merleau-Ponty*, ed. H. Silverman (London: Routledge, 1988), 46.

26. Merleau-Ponty's philosophy has been called a philosophy of ambiguity; two important studies of his philosophy even use this expression in their title (namely, Alphonse de Waelhens, *Une philosophie de l'ambiguïté. L'existentialisme de Merleau-Ponty (A Philosophy of Ambiguity. Merleau-Ponty's Existentialism)* [Louvain: Publications universitaires de Louvain, 1951] and Bernard Halda, *Merleau-Ponty ou la philosophie de l'ambiguïté (Merleau-Ponty or the Philosophy of Ambiguity)* [Paris: Archives des Lettres Modernes, 1966]). Reversibility is the defining theme of Merleau-Ponty's late philosophy, and it can be traced back to his earlier philosophy as well, as M.C. Dillon has shown (Martin C. Dillon, 'Merleau-Ponty and the Reversibility Thesis', *Man and World*, 16 (1983): 365–388 and *Merleau-Ponty's Ontology* [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1998]).

27. Hegel, PhS, 55/79.

28. Merleau-Ponty, 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy', 26, 47.

29. Merleau-Ponty, 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy', 47.

30. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, transl. A. Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 131.

31. Merleau-Ponty, 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy', 53.

32. Ibid.

33. Hegel, PhS, 55/79.

34. Merleau-Ponty, 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy', 36.

35. Merleau-Ponty, 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy', 44.

36. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, 137.
37. Ibid.
38. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, 138.
39. Ibid.
40. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, transl. D.A. Landes (London: Routledge, 2013), xiv.
41. Husserl, Hua VI, 188/185; see Chapter 7.
42. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, viii.
43. Ibid.
44. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, xiv.
45. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, xx.
46. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, xiii.
47. Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, 178.
48. Ibid.
49. Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, 161.
50. For example, Merleau-Ponty, 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy', 33; *Phenomenology of Perception*, viii, 241, 454 f.; *Visible and Invisible*, 49.
51. Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, 164.
52. Ibid.
53. Merleau-Ponty, *Visible and Invisible*, 49.
54. Merleau-Ponty, 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy', 33.
55. The translator of 'Philosophy and Non-Philosophy since Hegel', Hugh Silverman, states in a footnote that 'the meaning of intentionality as bi-directionality, as an intentional arc which is reversible, is Merleau-Ponty's particular contribution' (306, fn. 52), but it seems to me that Merleau-Ponty's notion has a very strong basis in Husserl himself.
56. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 241.
57. Ibid.
58. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, 132.

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